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RICHARD CARLILE

RICHARD CARLILE.

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RICHARD CARLILE

AGITATOR

HIS LIFE AND TIMES

BY

GUY A. ALDRED

LONDON:
THE PIONEER PRESS,
61 FARRINGDON STREET, E.C.4.

1923

BL2790
.C3A5

Printed and Published by
THE PIONEER PRESS
(G. W. FOOTE & CO., LTD.),
61 Farringdon Street, London, E.C. 4.

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DEDICATION

To My Friend,

WALTER WILLIAM STRICKLAND, B.A.,
Ex-Ninth Baronet, Citizen of Prague.

I dedicate this account of
the life and times of

RICHARD CARLILE

My master in the struggle towards civilization without superstition and society without misery,

because

Strickland became my friend following on my first imprisonment for "sedition," and has encouraged me consistently to struggle for the expression of truth and liberty according to my light without hesitation or fear of consequences to myself.

London, June, 1923.

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ILLUSTRATIONS

Richard Carlile. Robert Taylor.

FOREWORD

THE present biography is a growth, as all serious work of this description must be. It embodies the text of the biography I published in the *Agnostic Journal,* 1905-6, and in the *Herald of Revolt,* for 1911. The latter was issued in pamphlet form in 1912. I incorporate also the chapters of an entirely new biography I contributed to the *Freethinker,* April-June, 1923. I deeply regret that lack of means prevent me from bringing together in this volume the several essays of Carlile I have reprinted in the *Herald of Revolt* and the *Spur* between 1910 and 1921 and in the pamphlet, *Jail Jottings.*

I do not claim that this essay is well-written, but I insist that it is written with sympathy and understanding. It is well-informed and compiled from first-hand sources. All that is useful in Holyoake's "life," published in 1843 I have embodied, after checking his facts. Though I disapprove strongly his censure of Carlile's "egotism," I have freely quoted for their terse insight, his summaries of Carlile's vigour, courage, and usefulness.

This MS. was offered to the Rational Press Association but they declined it.

GUY A. ALDRED.

Shepherds Bush, June, 1923.

RICHARD CARLILE

I.—The Carlile Family.

Richard Carlile was born on December 8, 1790, at Ashburton, in Devonshire. His father was a cobbler, much too talented to possess any business acumen, who became in turn an exciseman, a schoolmaster, and a soldier, and published some essays on mathematics. He died at the early age of thirty-four, when Richard was four years old. His mother worked hard and long in order to keep the family in food, clothes, and shelter. She was left a widow with two infant daughters and one infant son (Richard) to maintain, but discharged her task well until about 1800 when she was afflicted with sickness and poverty. She died in 1820 at the age of sixty when Carlile was imprisoned in Dorchester Gaol for his publication of Paine's and Palmer's works. Commenting on the letter announcing her death, Carlile said in his *Republican*: "I had hoped that her life would have been extended a few years, that she might have witnessed the result of my present career. But it affords me pleasure, that, in spite of the efforts of the Society for the Suppression of Vice, the Priests, and the Attorney-General of a wicked administration, I have still retained a roof to shelter her, and under which she died."

The truth is Carlile out of his earnings as a journeyman supported not only his wife and children but spared a little for his mother and two sisters, and his

determination to do this led to the first dissatisfaction between his wife and himself.

His elder sister grew up a violent Methodist and bitterly resented his anti-religious activity. His younger sister went to prison in his cause because she resented the injustice of his persecution. All the family connections opposed her save a first cousin who applauded the heroism and social usefulness of brother and sister. Virtually, as Holyoake says, Carlile "stood alone on his own hearth, as he stood often alone in the world."

II.—Early Years.

Carlile, from time to time, in his various open letters to friends and opponents, relates the story of his career. By going through his various journals it would be quite easy to let him relate the story in his own way—and a most readable story indeed it would make. Holyoake, in a small biography published in 1843, does little more than employ Carlile's descriptions, merely substituting the third person for the first; and Foote, about forty years later, merely reproduces this record with the addition of a few comments. Carlile's own story down to the time of his imprisonment is original and makes more interesting reading. His daughter's story of his character as father and companion could stand in her description, and her summary of his youth dismissed like Holyoake's. The records of his trials could be taken from the public prints, usefully edited and accurately com-

piled. Then Holyoake's and Foote's estimate of his career could be preserved, thus completing, with a selection of Carlile's essays, a worthy memorial of the career of a great and useful man of the common people.

To further this idea I am letting Carlile himself relate the facts and circumstances of his life prior to his imprisonment:—

"Every man is an ignorant man; knowledge can only exist in degrees; perfection is unattainable; though improvement will never cease; therefore, the state or degree of a man's learning is the state or degree of his ignorance. Learning and ignorance are synonymous words. The most ignorant man has learned something; the most learned is ignorant of something. The duty of all is to increase the degrees of knowledge in all, and of each to increase his own, which he can do by resolution.

"To state correctly what I now am, it is necessary that I should state the means which I have had to acquire knowledge; and though this will set me to speak of myself, from infancy upwards, it is a story which none can tell as well as myself. But this speaking of one's self is pleasure, at all times, whatever affectation might have affected to the contrary; particularly where a man is not ashamed to expose his past career to the knowledge of all.

"In my youth there was nothing singular; as a boy among boys I thought more of excelling them in their foibles than in their virtues; and having no father to guide me, I may say that, until twenty years of age, I was a weed left to pursue its own course. I had some of the works of Paine in my hands before then, but I did not read them, whether from prejudice or a total lack of ideas upon politics I do not know; for although I heard them praised, I felt no desire to read them.

"At the pressing wish of my mother I was apprenticed to a business which I never liked—that of tin-plate working. My apprenticeship, which was seven years and three months, was a most painful one. I had a master who taught me nothing but that which was profitable to himself, and cared no further about me than as to the largest quantity of labour he could obtain from me upon the smallest quantity of food.

"The maximum on one side, and the minimum on the other, was his domestic economy; or I should rather say that the master looked after the labour, and the mistress after the food. These unpleasant extremes did not fail to create war, and after suffering such an apprenticeship, imprisonment, such as mine now is, is to me no punishment. But I merely introduce this point to show that, through a seven years' apprenticeship, I did not gain an iota of book knowledge, beyond what my own disposition led me to seek, and that was very little, until the last year that I had fought myself independent of the master's table and bed. I do not say that I was faultless, but I taught that master, as I shall teach my present oppressors, that mine is a temperament from which persecution can wring nothing but perseverance in resisting it, and that neither pains nor poverty can subdue me, where I see myself to be right; and, even if in error, a good word, a soft word will do in a moment that which no menace or punishment will ever do. In short, as to temper, I may say, that I flatter myself of mine being precisely that which was required to accomplish that object which I have undertaken. I know that my body is not indestructible; but I also know, by experience, that its moral part cannot be separately destroyed nor subdued in a contest for that which is fair and right.

"The master considered that the only time necessary

for recreation was five or six hours for sleep. By my play-fellows and companions I was both blamed and derided for being a slave, and the master depicted as a negro-driver. I soon began to show a disposition to lay claim to, not the 'Rights of Man,' but the rights of apprentices, which my master professed to be ignorant of, and, like some of our aristocrats with respect to the 'Rights of Man,' he endeavoured to convince me that apprentices had no rights at all.

"As to school education, I had but little. I was so far unfortunate in parents as to have a father that neither cared about wife nor children, which left an amiable mother no alternative but to seek bread for me and my two sisters by her needle. She was a widow before I was five years old, and was kept a widow by the strength of her maternal affection. But this widowhood was our rescue from misery. Her character spotless, and manners, to the witness of which I can call all the inhabitants of the town, she was assisted so far as to be put into an old-established shop, and at once placed above all want.

"My first schoolmistress was old Cherry Chalk, who taught the alphabet on a horn book, and performed all sorts of cures without medicine by the potent power of charms! She was not a witch, but much respected as one who performed wonderful cures. There was another old woman who had the title of the witch, and one in a town is enough on whom Christian ignorance might vent its spleen. I had two other schoolmistresses of a more respectable stamp than old Cherry. I believe the first taught for three-halfpence a week, and the other two at twopence. When I got to a fivepenny school it was considered an extravagant affair, too expensive to be borne, and a successful effort was made to put me upon the list of free scholars.

"It is a singular circumstance, but I can trace both *The Quarterly Review* and *The Republican* to the free schools of Ashburton. William Gifford and Doctor Ireland, the Dean of Westminster, both received the rudiments of their education at these free schools, and I came after them to undo, I hope, all the mischief that they, as politicians, have done. These free schools of Ashburton were not so free for the poor as for the rich. One of them was a school for Latin and Greek, wholly free of endowment, and here only the children of the richer persons were admitted. Here, also, I followed Dr. Ireland and William Gifford.

"From the age of six to nine I was at writing and arithmetic, from nine to twelve at Latin. At twelve years of age I was taken from school, under the recommendation of the father of a Mrs. Lee, and placed in consequence of my knowledge of Latin with Mr. Lee, the chemist and druggist of Exeter. Here my stay did not exceed four months. Too much of a man to go to school again, I lay idle for three months, and amused myself with drawing and colouring pictures to sell in my mother's shop to the people who came thither from the country. It is rather singular that my mother should keep a retail shop, and that one of her principal wholesale dealers should be the firm which consisted of the brothers of the Attorney-General, Gifford.

"The sum of all this narrative is that, though at twelve years of age, I left school, with a knowledge of writing, arithmetic, and the Latin language, with a pretty good knowledge of words, particularly in the tact of spelling them, I was wholly ignorant of what may be termed English grammar. I recollect well, that, when my severe old writing and figure master, Cock Hannaford, as we used to call him, was told that

I was about to leave him to learn Latin, he said: 'Hi! Hi! You had better let him learn English first.'

"For my own part, I had no more idea of school education than that it was a pastime for boys, and I sought an exchange from 'Cock Hannaford' to the Latin school with no idea but that of more play and less punishment, and because all the better dressed boys were there. But I found after that this smattering of Latin gave me everywhere an air of superiority, and, among such company as I was able to keep, I passed for a scholar. The very vanity and flattery attached to this state of mind, I believe, was my chief inducement to seek further knowledge. In Exeter, as an apprentice, I became acquainted with several bookbinders, which led alike to a reading of, and a conversation about, books. Young as they were, they avowed themselves Deists, whilst I received no impression from the word, and was wholly ignorant as to what a Deist signified as distinct from Christianity. At times they ridiculed my going to a particular church out of compliment to or by the persuasion of a friend, but I understood nothing that they meant, and attributed their remarks to youthful levity, or a tinge of profligacy. In fact, I knew nothing about the particulars of politics or religion until I read the writings of Thomas Paine at twenty-seven years of age. My young friends were Painites, but they wholly failed in making an impression upon me as to the true principles of politics and religion. The subject seemed to me to be foreign and useless, and this, I can suppose, is the state of mind of those who now oppose me, or are indifferent as to what I am doing. We are generally either too dull for fair and free enquiry, or too apt to reject proposed changes because we did not discover the defects of existing systems, or because of the persons who offer these changes."

III.—An Epoch of Cant and Terror.

Some persons are able to conceive of one period of class society being more constitutional and less despotic than an earlier one. My judgment is not so happy. I cannot conceive of degrees in tyranny because I utterly despise despotism. I see slight modifications varied by tragic similarities in all fundamental characteristics. The parallels, not the passing improvements, appall me. Hence I am defiant and cynical, and preserve the mood of Richard Carlile, where men like Holyoake explain that our epoch differs from that in which Carlile lived; or, what is more amusing still, contend that the hungry forties (now viewed with horror by the tamest democrats) was an enlightened period of constitutionalism so different from the days of despotism in which Carlile lived and struggled. Reformers of this description think like prosecuting attorneys because they have not the philosophy to be agitators.

How true or how false is Holyoake's view of the peculiar despotic character of the epoch into which Carlile was born will be seen if we vision the period 1790-1816, the time that Carlile was growing up and struggling into manhood, amidst an acute struggle by the political agitators for a Free Press, and a fearful and mendacious determination by the Government to suppress the forces set free by the Great French Revolution.

In the year 1792 Paine was indicted for publishing the second part of his famous *Rights of Man;* the work had previously been denounced in a Royal proclamation. Erskine was retained for the defence. He immediately became the victim of a calumnious clamour. A conspiracy was formed by the Crown and

the Government not only to deprive Paine of Counsel but also of friendship. Erskine was told in plain terms that he must not defend Paine and Horne Tooke was indicted for high treason because he appeared to be the friend of Paine. The following year Erskine partly atoned by prosecuting Williams for publishing Paine's *Age of Reason* but repented the part he played after Williams was convicted.

Everywhere the Government encouraged informers and held out rewards to treachery. It sought to turn every man into a spy and every neighbourhood into the seat of an inquisition. Its paid attorneys persistently referred to Paine as that wretched outcast. Its interested judges declared the conduct of all who read or circulated Paine to be peculiarly marked with the spirit of diabolical mischief.

Associations were formed in every part of the country for the purpose of suppressing all propaganda directed towards a reform in Parliament, and offering rewards for information leading to the conviction of those who circulated Paine's writings. Members of these Associations habitually served as jurors in all the cases that came before the Courts where the prosecution had been proceeded with by the Government at the instance of the associations in question. In the event of objection being taken to the jury on this ground by the defence, the judges invariably decided that the objection was not valid because they (the judges) had also condemned the works of Paine.

This is what happened in the case of Thomas Muir, who was sentenced to transportation in August, 1793, for circulating Paine's works. Muir was a man of unblemished moral character, but, because of his zeal for a very mild Parliamentary Reform, he was convicted on the evidence of men who had publicly declared that they would do their best to hang him.

Similar treatment was meted out to the Rev. F. T. Palmer, a Unitarian minister of Dundee, who was sentenced to seven years' banishment at Perth, in September, 1793, for publishing a proclamation of *A Society of the Friends of Liberty,* written by George Mealmaker, a weaver. There was not a word of violence in the whole address, which reached its extreme demand in a request for universal suffrage! In the event of Palmer returning before the end of seven years, the authorities were to publish an official certification of his death. In a word, he was to be outlawed and anyone was entitled to murder him.

During these trials one of the Lords of Justiciary declared that "no man had a right to speak of the Constitution unless he possessed landed property"; and another affirmed that "since the abolition of torture, there was no adequate punishment for sedition."

Muir and Palmer were subsequently conveyed on the same boat from their Scottish prisons to Woolwich, in order to be sent to different penal settlements on the other side of the world. They were loaded with irons and damned to the filthiest occupations whilst on the way to Woolwich and during their sojourn there prior to transportation.

Muir and Palmer were but two of the many victims of that aristocratic arrogance and working-class ignorance which constituted the hemlock and night-shade the governing-class physicians prescribed for the health of the nation.

Pitt was the chief prescriber of these remedies. He was in office. His administration witnessed the establishment of a confidential department unknown to the constitution termed "the management of the House of Commons." In the public accounts it was immersed under the head of "Secret Service Money."

It was usually given to the Secretary of State when that post was filled by a commoner. The business of the department was to distribute with *art* and *policy* amongst the members who had no ostensible places, sums of money for their support during the session. It was no uncommon circumstance, at the end of a session, for a gentleman to receive five hundred or a thousand pounds "for his services"!

To express any disapprobation of this Parliamentary undertaking meant imprisonment in Newgate, transportation to a penal settlement, or banishment or outlawry. Even the prospect of being remanded in Newgate awaiting trial was sufficiently dismal to daunt the bravest hearts. The administration of what was termed "justice" was a somewhat slow process. This was to the advantage of the scum of society who acted as gaolers. The fettering of prisoners, no matter whether they were convicted, awaiting trial, merely debtors, or "politicals," was part of the business of extortion practised by these gentlemen. Manacles were clapped on all comers unless a financial bargain had been struck before their arrival. These manacles were on both the hands and feet, and were heavily made. If it were known that the prisoner had control of money, they were kept on until "easement" had been bought.

In the year 1793, John Frost, an attorney, was indicted for saying at the Percy Street Coffee House, after dinner:—

> I am for equality. I see no reason why one man should not be upon a footing with another. It is every man's birthright. Yes, I am for equality and no king. I mean no king in England. The constitution of this country is a bad one in having a king.

He was kept in Newgate some time awaiting trial, and was submitted to the treatment I have described.

He was finally convicted on May 20, 1793, and then kept in Newgate until June 20, awaiting sentence. He was then struck off the rolls, ordered to be imprisoned in Newgate another six months, and during this period to stand each day in and upon the pillory at Charing Cross for one hour between the hours of twelve and two—the busiest time of the day. He was also ordered to find security and sureties for his good behaviour for five years in £700, and to stay in prison until it was forthcoming.

A few months before Frost's conviction and sentence, a young tallow chandler from Scotland, named Daniel Crichton, was sentenced to three months' imprisonment for saying in casual conversation during a visit to the town :—

> Damn your king! Damn your George Rex! We have no king in Scotland, and we will have no king in England!

Whilst on remand Crichton was confined in the worst part of Clerkenwell Prison, loaded with irons, amongst those convicted of the worst offences.

For circulating, selling, or even lending *The Jockey Club,* Paine's *Address to the Addressers,* and *The Rights of Man* (Part II), booksellers and private individuals all over the country were sentenced to a minimum of four years' imprisonment, ordered to pay fines of £260, and to find sureties for good behaviour in £1,000 for five years. It should be added that these three books were often circulated together.

For posting up "An Address for the purpose of obtaining a reform in Parliament" bill-stickers received a minimum sentence of six months' imprisonment, and were then kept in prison until they gave security and found sureties for their good behaviour in £200.

In December, 1793, Thomas Briellat, a Hackney

pump maker, was sentenced to one year's imprisonment, ordered to pay £100 fines, and to find security and sureties for his good behaviour for five years in £1,000, for publicly saying :—

> A reformation in this country cannot be effected without a revolution. We have no occasion for any king.

At Nottingham Assizes, Daniel Holt, the printer of the *Newark Herald,* was found guilty of selling Paine's *Address to the Addressers* and of reprinting and publishing *An Address to the Manufacturers, etc., of Unrepresented Towns, on a Parliamentary Reform.* The latter was only a republication of a paper published by a Society in London for effecting a Parliamentary reform in the year 1783, of which Pitt and the Duke of Richmond were members. At that time it was printed in all the newspapers. The intervening decade had witnessed Pitt's rise to power, and consequent total destruction of his former principles. For this Holt had to suffer. After being kept in prison for some months, awaiting sentence, he was damned to four years' imprisonment, and ordered to find security and sureties for good behaviour in £500.

Publicans were told by magistrates that if they allowed discussions on politics in their houses—in the event of anything being said displeasing to the Government—they would lose their licenses. They were also asked what papers they took in and were told to take care there was no sedition in them, as they would be punished for distributing them to their customers.

The House of Lords applauded vigorously a sermon preached before that august assembly on January 30, 1793, in which the good bishop asserted that the people had nothing to do with the laws but to obey them. He censured and lamented as folly all freedom

of dispute on matters of such high importance as the origin of government and the authority of sovereigns. He claimed that the divine right of the sovereign of this country as first magistrate to the private citizen's absolute obedience could not be denied without the highest of all treasons, treason against the paramount authority of God. He compassioned "those venerable exiles, the prelates and clergy of the fallen Church of France," and ascribed all political discussion to Atheism and the Devil. "Miserable men," he averred, "we are in the gall of bitterness and the bond of iniquity." This Curzon-like oration was very popular in ruling-class circles.

Robert Hall, the celebrated Baptist divine, then twenty-nine years old and entering on his career as a Nonconformist minister, replied to the Bishop in his famous (because much over-rated) *Apology for the Freedom of the Press*. Hall pleaded for annual parliaments, universal suffrage, a free Press, secret ballot, Church disestablishment, and the sovereignty of the people.

Quite a little comedy was enacted when Hall reprinted this work in 1821. The *Christian Guardian* declared his Parliamentary proposals to be without Scriptural authority:—

> In what part of the sacred volume he has discovered the least sanction for any of these notions, we are at a loss to imagine. In fact, the whole pamphlet is an argument in favour of the supremacy and infallibility of the people, and of the necessity of paying the most implicit obedience to the least expression of their will.

No Atheist could state the case for liberty and citizenship against Christianity more neatly than this orthodox critic does. Peace to his dust and congratulations to his vision! Of course there cannot be two

sovereigns—you cannot have a king supreme and the people supreme also. Finally, you must support either tyranny and robbery, which is monarchy, or the commonwealth, which is a workers' republic.

Continuing its pious strain, the *Christian Guardian* "observes with great sorrow the republication" of this work "under Mr. Hall's own sanction.....while the wretched Carlile is braving every effort that can be made to stop the torrent of blasphemy which has so long issued from his warehouse."

Hall replied that the reviewer's purpose in coupling his name with the mention of Carlile was "that of exciting hatred and horror." Of course, he was shocked at Carlile's blasphemy, etc.! Quite a modern touch that.

However, to return to the factors that were operating to awaken Carlile's genius for liberty. On March 5, 1790, that is nine months before Carlile was born, there was founded in Manchester a Church and King Club to celebrate *the throwing out* by the House of Commons the Bill for the repeal of the infamous Test Acts. Their advertisement of triumph and association was as follows:—

Manchester,
March 5, 1790.

> The members of the Church and King Club intend to dine at the Hotel on Saturday, the 13th instant, to celebrate the *glorious decision* of the House of Commons on Tuesday last upon the great Constitutional question, the Repeal of the Corporation and Test Acts.

The first meeting of this reactionary banditti was attended with solemnities as ridiculous as any to be found in the history of Toryism. They wore uniforms with the representation of the *Old Church* at Manchester engraved on their buttons. They appointed a committee for the admission of members of suitable

lives and conversations (*sic*), and struck medals to commemorate the fact that the motion for repeal had been negatived in Parliament. Their standing toast (supposed to be a constitutional one) was: *Church and King and down with the Rump!*

But we shall understand the purpose of this organization better if we consider that its members were allied closely to the Vice Society and supported always the majority of the bishops in their reactionary votings in the House of Lords. An instance of ecclesiastical zeal for the principles of Christian charity is found in the case of the Bill for the Reform of the Criminal Law that came before the House of Lords in 1810. *No bishop voted for this measure.*

That there existed a real need to ameliorate this law, if its administration was to make the slightest pretence to justice, will be seen from the following account of the number of persons convicted and executed for forgery and other offences, in England and Wales, from 1805 to 1818 inclusive:—

Offences.	Convicted.	Executed.
Burglary	1,874	199
Petty larceny (under £40)	1,119	17
Horse-stealing	852	85
Housebreaking (daytime) and larceny	761	17
Robbery from the person	848	188
Sheep-stealing	896	43
Forgery	501	207
Murder	229	202
Total	7,080	958

One hundred and seventy-six of the persons executed for forgery were victims of bank prosecutions. These bank hangings were the direct consequence of the introduction of paper credit. This will be understood quite clearly if we remember that

from 1783 to 1797 there were only *four* prosecutions for forgery by the Bank of England. In an equal period, from 1797 to 1811, they swelled to the enormous number of 469.

On April 21, 1818, Joseph Kaye, Solicitor to the Bank of England, published the following official account of the number of persons prosecuted, acquitted, convicted, and executed for forging notes of the Governor and Company of the Bank of England, and for knowingly uttering or possessing such forged notes, knowing them to be forged, since the suspension of cash payments by the Bank, in February, 1797, to February 25, 1818 :—

Year.	Executed.	Non-Capital Convictions.	Acquitted.	Total Prosecuted.
1797	1	—	1	2
1798	11	—	1	12
1799	12	—	3	15
1800	29	—	15	44
1801	32	1	21	54
1802	32	12	19	63
1803	7	1	1	9
1804	13	8	4	25
1805	10	14	4	28
1806	—	9	1	10
1807	16	24	5	45
1808	9	23	2	34
1809	23	29	16	68
1810	10	16	3	29
1811	5	19	9	33
1812	26	26	12	64
1813	9	49	7	65
1814	5	39	3	47
1815	7	51	5	63
1816	20	84	16	120
1817	32	95	15	142
1818	4	21	1	26
Total	313		Total	998

The total amount of money expended by the Bank in prosecutions over this period was £249,900 os. 8d.

Ricardo calculated the clear gains of the Bank from the time of the suspension of cash payments in 1797 to the year 1816 to be, *not* including the profit derived by the Bank from the destruction of its notes, private deposits, and exchequer bills :—

Year Commencing Jan.	Surplus Capital.	Profits after Paying Dividends and Bonuses.	Divs. and Bonuses Together. Per cent.
	£	£	
1797	3,826,890	89,872	7
1798	3,916,762	533,621	7
1799	4,450,383	509,155	17
1800	3,941,228	611,981	7
1801	4,553,209	116,038	12
1802	4,669,247	460,509	9½
1803	5,129,756	765,859	7
1804	5,895,615	306,794	12
1805	6,202,409	346,335	12
1806	6,548,744	368,008	12
1807	6,916,752	581,274	10
1808	7,498,026	385,865	10
1809	7,883,981	470,760	10
1810	8,354,651	651,483	10
1811	9,006,134	722,188	10
1812	9,728,322	739,867	10
1813	10,468,139	809,786	10
1814	11,279,975	1,081,649	10
1815	12,359,624	1,066,625	10
1816	13,426,249	——	—

In reply to the Bank Report Committee of the House of Lords, Ricardo stated that the following was an accurate account of the profits of the Bank since the Restriction to 1816—a period of nineteen years :—

	£
In bonuses and increase of dividends	7,451,156
New Bank Stock (£2,910,600) divided among proprietors	7,276,500
Increased value of capital of £11,642,000 (which on an average of 1797 was worth £125, and in 1816 was worth £250)	14,553,000
Total gain on 1797 capital of £11,642,000 in 19 years	£29,280,626

This means that, for nineteen years, the ruling class hanged and transported about eight hundred persons, and, in addition to their old dividend, made a profit of nearly three hundred per cent.

In 1814 Patrick Colquhoun published a *Treatise on the Resources of the British Empire* in which he gave the following general view of the different classes of society in Great Britain and their respective incomes :—

Class.	No. of Persons (Including Families and Domestics).	Total. Income. £
Nobility and Gentry: Peers, Baronets, Knights, Country Gentlemen	416,535 ...	58,422,590
Clergy: Eminent Clerics	9,000 ...	1,080,000
Lesser	87,000 ...	3,500,000
Dissenting Clergy, including Itercerant Preachers	25,000 ...	500,000
State and Revenue: All persons employed under Government	114,500 ...	6,830,000
Law: Judges, Barristers, Attorneys, Clerks, etc.	95,000 ...	7,600,000
Physic: Physicians, Surgeons, Apothecaries	90,000 ...	5,400,000
Trade: Big Merchants	35,000 ...	9,100,000
Shopkeepers and Retail Tradesmen	700,000 ...	28,000,000
Innkeepers and Publicans ...	437,000 ...	8,750,000

Class.	No. of Persons (Including Families and Domestics).	Total. Income.
		£
Agriculture: Large Freeholders	385,000 ...	19,250,000
Lesser	1,050,000 ...	21,000,000
Farmers	1,540,000 ...	33,600,000
Working Class: Agricultural Labourers, Mechanics, Artizans, and all workers employed in manufactures, mines and minerals (excluding domestics as mentioned in 1st class)	7,497,531 ...	82,451,547

The compiler of this table was the Receiver of the Thames Police Office, a most loyal man, who, for his loyalty, received an income of £6,884 19s. 1d. per annum. In a *Treatise on Indigence* he declared that "poverty is a *most necessary ingredient* in society without which nations and communities could not exist in a state of *civilization.*"

This man shows that the average income per person (including dependents which, in the noble class, simply spells greater comfort of service and minimises the actual income of the noble by exaggerating the income of his domestics) per class is as follows:—

	£	
Nobility and Gentry	145	per person
Clergy: Eminent	120	,, ,,
,, Lesser	40	,, ,,
,, Dissenting	25	,, ,,
State and Revenue Officials	56	,, ,,
Law	80	,, ,,
Physic	60	,, ,,
Large Freeholders	50	,, ,,
Small ,, ...	20	,, ,,
Merchants	206	,, ,,
Shopkeepers	40	,, ,,
Publicans	20	,, ,,
Working Class	10	,, ,,

By 1816 the average income of the working-class had fallen to £7 per head.

In this respect, of the really useful or producing class, being the most miserable, degraded, and oppressed, this epoch possesses some likeness to our own. There exists also a professional parallel between the two periods, in the way in which the Bar clamours for the Bench, the manner in which counsel first appear for the defence in Crown prosecution of a political character and utter seemingly generous sentiments of political liberty, only to appear as bitter Crown prosecutors, and then as judges presiding at the iniquitous rites of sacrifice performed by tyranny. Names that became infamous as symbols of a persecuting Bench during the period of Carlile's trials and imprisonments are discovered, during the time of his development to political consciousness, on the side (apparently and with much constitutional circumspection) of political freedom. Thus, in the case of the Earl of Thanet, charged with riot in the Court of King's Bench on April 25, 1799, we have engaged counsel who are advancing to judgeships and discarding the task of defending, and others who are defending, en route to becoming bitter prosecuting attorneys, and later, in their turn, judges.

The counsel for the Crown in this case included :—

(1) Mr. Attorney-General, Sir John Scott, afterwards Lord Chancellor of Eldon.
(2) Mr. Law, afterwards Lord Ellenborough and Lord Chief Justice of the King's Bench.
(3) Mr. Abbott, afterwards Lord Chief Justice of the King's Bench and Baron Tenterden.

The Counsel for the defence included :—

(1) The Hon. Thomas Erskine, afterwards Lord Chancellor Erskine.

(2) Mr. Vicary Gibbs, afterwards Sir Vicary Gibbs, afterwards Chief Justice of the Court of Common Pleas.

(3) Mr. William Draper Best, afterwards Chief Justice of the Court of Common Pleas and Baron Wynford.

Consider the facts already related in this chapter and then listen to the speeches of the counsel in this case.

Mr. Attorney-General Sir John Scott sounds very modern as he addresses the jury : " May it please your Lordships and Gentlemen of the Jury.....I am obliged .....to impute.....an offence which appears to me to be one of the most heinous, the consideration of which has been offered, in the history of our law, to the decision of a jury.....Gentlemen, *when I consider that the pure administration of law in this country is the great security upon which all the public blessings known to the country rest,*" etc.

How modern ! What unmeaning irony ! The phrasing of a brain dulled to humour by the insolence of interest.

Hear the Hon. Thomas Erskine for the defence : " Gentlemen of the Jury, it now becomes my duty to address you.....The undisturbed and unruffled course of justice is the universal source of human security..... It has pleased God to give us a long reign of that security in England.....her inhabitants have for ages lived contented under her laws, because they have lived in safety."

Thus lied, in his best constitutional manner, the famous and much over-rated Erskine.

IV.—Legal Biography.

The Thanet case arose out of the acquittal of Arthur O'Connor, on a charge of High Treason, at Maidstone, in May 1789. Here, Mr. Gurney, who was to distinguish himself a few years later as Counsel for the Crown against Carlile, appeared for the defence. He jibes at the Crown and the methods of the Attorney-General yet never forgets to applaud his own time at the expense of all previous time, applying to previous ages a language identical with that which a modern lawyer might apply to Mr. Gurney's period.

Pleading the cause of freedom, Mr. Gurney says: "May it please your Lordship, Gentlemen of the Jury.....recollect that I stand here for the life and honour of a fellow-subject to answer a charge which seeks his death and infamy.....at a time, the most perilous for a prisoner to meet it, when the situation of the country.....the alarms which have prevailed..... prejudices which have been created.....passions..... which have been generally inflamed, all contribute to .....weigh down the person who stands at the bar accused.....

"Times have been when courts of justice (which I need not say were a disgrace to the name of courts of justice) have been made the means and instruments of *judicial murders*; for no other name do some of those *transactions* in past ages which bear the title of *trials* deserve than *judicial murders*, when the law was tortured for the purposes of oppression, and when juries, influenced either by the authority of the prosecutors, by the circumstances of the times, or their own passions and prejudices, shed the blood of innocence.

"The Attorney-General in his opening said to you,

with a seriousness and solemnity well becoming the occasion, that he should make out such a case against the prisoners at the bar, that he thought it was not within the compass of possibility for them to give such an answer to it, as to entitle them to a verdict of acquittal. Gentlemen, that language may be somewhat new to you, but it is not new to me. I have heard the same kind of language, from the same learned gentleman, delivered in the same solemn manner more than once, or twice, or thrice, or even four times; but I never yet knew that jury, in a case of high treason, who at the conclusion of the cause coincided with him in judgment."

The only defendant who was found guilty of High Treason at the Maidstone trial was James O'Coigly on the unsupported and self-contradictory testimony of a Bow Street Runner. Mr. Justice Buller delivered a long harangue showing that the verdict was very proper and passed the usual sentence: defendant to be drawn on a hurdle to place of execution; hanged by the neck but not until dead; taken down, and whilst yet alive, bowels to be taken out and burnt before his face; afterwards head severed from body; body divided into four parts; head and body at the king's disposal. This atrocious sentence concluded with the pious words: "And may God Almighty have mercy on your soul."

O'Coigly was executed at Pennington Heath on Thursday, June 7. He was suspended for ten minutes, and then cut down, when his head was severed from his body, and both were immediately buried under the gallows, "the king having graciously remitted the remainder of the sentence!"

The judge who sentenced with such hearty approval O'Coigly was responsible through his advice for Abbott being called to the Bar. And, though at

the time of which we are speaking, Abbott, Law, Scott, Gibbs, Best, are all at the Bar, it will assist the narrative and aid our understanding of the period and the utility of Richard Carlile's career if we glimpe into the future as well as measure the past and present of these legal luminaries.

Sir Charles Abbott, at this time junior counsel to the Treasury, drew up the indictments in the State trials. Born on October 7, 1762, he was the son of a hairdresser and educated at the Canterbury Free School, where he met Thurlow, a son of the Lord Chancellor, and became acquainted with the latter. Sent to Oxford, March, 1781, he took his B.A., and became a fellow and tutor of his college. He was admitted a student of the Inner Temple and became a special pleader. Married in 1795 and called to the Bar the following year, he became junior counsel for the Crown. He possessed no talents, was no leader, declined to take silk because of his inability to address juries, and yet his annual income in 1807 was returned as £8,026 5s., and he declined the Bench in 1808 because his income was too great! In 1801 he became the Recorder of Oxford, and in 1816 became a puisne judge of the Common Pleas, moving into the King's Bench in May of that year. In September, 1818, Lord Ellenborough resigned the office of Lord Chief Justice, and on November 4 Abbott succeeded him, thus becoming the judge at the mock trials of Richard Carlile. In April, 1827, Canning raised him to the peerage under the title of Baron Tenterden. He opposed the reform of the criminal law, the proposal to abolish punishment of death for forgery, the Reform Bill, and the Catholic Relief Bill.

Edward Law, who was Abbott's colleague among counsel for the Crown in the Thanet case, was the fourth son of the Bishop of Carlisle. He was educated

at Charterhouse and Cambridge and was friendly at the University with Vicary Gibbs, the defending counsel in the Thanet trial; became student at the Bar in 1769, on the same day as William Pitt. He became a K.C. in June, 1787, and was leading counsel for Warren Hastings. His three-day speech in 1792 made his reputation as counsel and orator. In November, 1793, Law became Tory Attorney-General and, from 1794 to 1802, prosecuted for sedition and treason, Hardy, Horne-Tooke, John Rewes, Thomas Walker, Joseph Wall. Knighted February 20, 1801. In April, 1801, he insisted on the suspension of Habeas Corpus, and also rushed through the House of Commons the Habeas Corpus suspension Indemnity Act. Became Lord Chief Justice in succession to Lord Kenyon in April, 1802, and was created Baron Ellenborough. He was an avowed reactionist and impudent defender of corruption, who placed on the Statute Bill ten *new* capital felonies (43 George IV, c. lviii, since repealed). Opposed all efforts to ameliorate the criminal code. The Hone acquittals in 1818 broke his heart, and he resigned from the Bench on November 6, 1818, and died on December 22 following.

Mr. Attorney-General Sir John Scott had received this appointment in 1794, after being Solicitor-General since 1788. Born at Newcastle-on-Tyne in 1751 and educated at Oxford, he was called to the Bar in 1776 and became K.C. in 1783. As M.P. and Law Officer of the Crown he rushed the Traitorous Correspondence Act through Parliament in 1793, Habeas Corpus Suspension Act in 1794, Treasonable Practices and Seditions Act, 1795. He strained the law of constructive treason to the uttermost. In July, 1795, he succeeded Sir James Eyre as Chief Justice of the Common Pleas, and was created Baron Eldon. In February, 1800, he made his maiden speech in the

House of Lords—in support of a measure to continue the suspension of the Habeas Corpus Suspension Act. In April, 1801, he became Lord Chancellor, and three months later, Earl Eldon.

Mr. William Draper Best, who was for the defence in the Thanet case, and was destined subsequently to distinguish himself as judge with Abbott and Bailey in the Carlile trials, was born in 1767. Educated at Oxford and called to the Bar in 1789, he was returned to Parliament in 1802 as a Whig. He became Recorder of Guildford in 1809, and Tory M.P. and Solicitor-General in 1813. He was elevated to the King's Bench in 1819 and knighted. Five years later he became Chief Justice of the Court of Common Pleas, and was created Baron Wynford in 1829 when he retired from the Bench.

With Vicary Gibbs we are brought to one of the most scandalous cases that ever disgraced the law reports of any time or nation. Born in 1751, the second son of the chief surgeon at Exeter Hospital, and educated at Eton and Cambridge, Gibbs was called to the Bar in 1783. He assisted Erskine in the Hardy and Horne-Tooke cases. In 1793 he defended William Winterbotham from a charge of delivering a seditious sermon, and by his powerful, though unsuccessful defence, prepared the way for his own later disgraceful war on the freedom of the Press. In this case Gibbs was opposed to Mr. Sergeant Rooke who, for his disgraceful success in prosecuting Winterbotham to conviction and sentence on perjured evidence, was knighted and appointed to a judgeship in the Court of Common Pleas.

From 1794 to 1817 Gibbs was Recorder of Oxford. He became K.C. in 1804, M.P. and Solicitor-General the following year. In April 1807 he became Attorney-General, and retained that post till his elevation to

the Bench in 1812. He resigned from the Bench in 1818 and died in 1820.

As Attorney-General, this man, who had defended Winterbotham to advance his own career, waged such incessant warfare against the Press that between 1808-1810 he filed forty-two *ex-officio* informations. One statute passed at his instigation (48 George III, c. 58) was so oppressive that it was never put into force. Yet, in 1811, Gibbs defended his "levity" in the House of Commons!

V.—Earning a Judgeship.

It is impossible to appreciate and to understand fully the nature of the struggle waged by Richard Carlile without pausing to consider the infamous prosecution of the Rev. William Winterbotham, an assistant preacher at How's Lane Baptist Chapel, Plymouth. Winterbotham was tried before the Hon. Baron Perryn and a special jury at Exeter on July 25, 1793, for preaching a seditious sermon in his chapel on November 5, 1792. The following day, July 26, he was charged, before the same judge and another jury, with preaching a seditious sermon in his chapel on November 18, 1792. Counsel for the Crown were Sergeants Rook and Lawrence, Messrs. Morris, Fanshawe, and Clapp; for the Defence, Vicary Gibbs, East, and Dampier.

. . . . . .

The indictment in the first trial was divided into fourteen counts and accused the defendant of uttering

the following alleged seditious words in his sermon: "The laws made at that time [the 1688 revolution] have been since abused and brought into disuse, and it particularly behoves me to speak of the present times. I highly approve of the Revolution in France, and I do not doubt but that it has opened the eyes of the people of England. Why are your streets and poor-houses crowded with poor and your gaols with thieves but because of the oppressive laws and taxes? I am astonished that you are quiet and contented under these grievances, and do not stand forth in defence of your rights. You fancy you live under a mild government and good laws, but it is no such thing. I speak boldly. I deny it; for it is no other than a person taking money out of one pocket and putting it in another. When there is a demand made to the House of Commons for a supply, they deny it at first, and on a second demand, there are two-thirds or three-fourths will grant it; and then they will share it among them. We have as much right to stand up as they did in France for our liberty. His Majesty was placed upon the throne upon condition of keeping certain laws and rules, and if he does not observe them he has no more right to the throne than the Stuarts had. Under these grievances [meaning taxes] 'tis time for you to stand forth in defence of your rights."

SERGEANT ROOKE made the opening speech for the Crown: "I stand forth authorized by the Government to prosecute the defendant, William Winterbotham, a dissenting preacher, for having preached a dissenting sermon.....

"For a man living under mild and equal laws to preach sedition and discontent is blasphemy against the Majesty of Heaven. Till of late, there has been no attempt to deny these principles; but in a neigh-

bouring country, never remarkable for religion, there has been a new light spring up. But if we look to that country we shall find nothing there to lead us to imitate them. We shall there see a desire of overturning all the old establishments under which we have lived so happily for a great number of years, and which till very lately were never thought of as subjects of investigation. The success of the French has induced their friends in England to stand forth and avow their principles, and one gave encouragement to the other, till at last it spoke out little short of treason. In all parts of the country persons were trumpeting forth sedition, till the Government found it necessary to interfere. The defendant, Mr. Winterbotham, a dissenting teacher at Plymouth, thought proper on November 5 last to preach a sermon of the most inflammatory nature.....

"If ever the trumpet of sedition was sounded in the pulpit it was done in this instance.....and a minister of the gospel who uttered such a discourse from the pulpit, betrayed his duty with respect to that gospel which he pretended to preach, the doctrines of which breathe nothing but peace, and in opposition to that peace for which he pretended to pray, thereby endeavoured to stir up the minds of his audience to mutiny and rage, and to put them in such a state of rebellion as we have seen in a neighbouring country.

"If ever a country had warning of the pernicious effects of sedition and tumult, it is this country; we have had warning by what passed in King Charles' time; we have had warning by what passed in the year 1780, when we knew what it was to have popular disturbances; and we have had warning by what has lately passed on the other side of the water. Our constitution has made us happier than any other nation upon earth, and if we are not content, we must de-

servedly fall; but if we are thankful for its blessings as we ought to be, we should repress those people who endeavour to instil a contrary doctrine into the minds of the public. When offenders of this sort are brought before us, we should without remorse find them guilty. If the jury should think the defendant guilty of the offence laid to his charge, they will say so without regret."

I do not propose to reproduce the complete examination and cross-examination of the witnesses, only the essential passages.

WILLIAM PADDON was the first witness for the Crown. He was examined by Mr. Morris.

Q.—On the fifth of November last was you at How's Lane Chapel?

A.—Yes.

Q.—Who preached at the chapel on that day?

A.—Mr. Winterbotham.

Q.—Do you know where his text was?

A.—No.

Q.—What was he preaching about?

A.—He was then [at time of Paddon's entrance] speaking of the riots in Birmingham, where he said there had been a lawless mob; that the dissenters above all others were much oppressed.

Cross-examined by Mr. Gibbs this witness stated that he was a member of the Church of England and a brush-maker. He went to the Baptist Chapel that evening because he was informed that Mr. Winterbotham was going to preach a political sermon. The following extracts from the cross-examination should be preserved and studied carefully to understand the ruling class psychology of the period:—

Q.—Did you not make any minutes of what you heard?

A.—Not before I gave information before the mayor.

Q.—You have done it since then?

A.—Yes, about a month after.

Q.—How many persons do you think were present when the sermon was preached?

A.—The congregation consisted of about two hundred.

Q.—And though there were two hundred persons present, you never could find anyone that could tell you where the text was.

A.—No—though I enquired of many.

Q.—Were there no innocent parts in the sermon which you recollect?

A.—There were very little innocent parts in the sermon.

Q.—You have told us Mr. Winterbotham said, his Majesty, if he did not see the laws duly observed, had no more right to the throne than a Stuart.....What did you understand by a Stuart?

A.—I understood he meant by a Stuart some officer under the Crown.....I considered it in the light of a gentleman's steward.

Q.—You thought Mr. Winterbotham meant some officer under the Crown like a gentleman's steward?

A.—Yes, I took very little notice of it, and did not think much about it.

JOHN KING was the second witness. He was examined by Sergeant Lawrence.

Q.—Did you go to the meeting in How's Lane on the fifth of November last?

A.—Yes.

Q.—Did you see the defendant there?

A.—Yes.

Q.—Had he begun his sermon?

A.—Yes.

Q.—What was he preaching about?

A.—He was speaking of the Revolution of 1688,

(Paddon and this witness went to the meeting together. Note their different declarations as to the topic of discussion at the time of their entrance.)

He was cross-examined by Mr. East.

Q.—Are you a frequenter of the meeting?

A.—No.

Q.—How came you to go there on that evening?

A.—Paddon (the first witness) told me there was to be a constitutional sermon preached at the Baptist meeting, and we agreed to go there.

Q.—Did you hear the text?

A.—No, I did not hear the text; I was not there at the beginning of the sermon.

Q.—How long was it before you went to the mayor about it?

A.—It was about a month after when we went to the mayor.

Q.—Could you at a month's distance take upon you to speak with accuracy as to particular words?

A.—Yes, I remembered the particular words.

Q.—Have you ever taken minutes of them since?

A.—No, I have never put anything into writing.

Q.—What were the particular words or sentences in the sermon which you thought improper?

A.—Mr. Winterbotham called the revolution of this country a glorious revolution.

(In the indictments of this time it was the custom to accuse persons ridiculing the revolution of 1688 of bringing contempt to bear upon "the glorious revolution." Thomas Paine was accused of that in the famous prosecution of *The Rights of Man.*)

Q.—Was there any other part you thought improper?

A.—He said, "Why are your streets crowded with vagrants, your poor-houses with poor, and your gaols with thieves? Owing to the *heavy* taxes." These I

am positive were the identical words. I could not be mistaken.

MRS. PRIDHAM was examined by Mr. Fanshawe. Her last answer is the only important one: "He then said, 'Why are your streets (or poor-houses) crowded with poor, and your jails with thieves, but because of the *oppressive taxes*.'"

She was cross-examined by Mr. Dampier.

Q.—Were you present at the beginning of the sermon?

A.—I was.

Q.—And do you recollect the text?

A.—No, I do not.

MISS MARGARET JAGO was examined by Mr. Clapp.

Q.—Were you there before the beginning of the sermon?

A.—Yes, I was there before Mr. Winterbotham came in.

Q.—Will you tell us what you recollect of the sermon?

A.—Mr. Winterbotham said our streets and poor-houses are filled with poor, and our gaols with thieves, on account of *oppressive* laws and taxes.

This witness was cross-examined by Mr. Gibbs.

Q.—Do you recollect Mr. Winterbotham saying in his sermon that the laws made at the time of the revolution have been since abused and brought into disuse?

A.—No, I do not recollect he said anything about the laws being abused or brought into disuse.

Q.—Did he say it (the French Revolution) had opened the eyes of the people of England?

A.—I do not recollect anything of the kind—I heard nothing about opening the eyes.

Q.—Do you recollect Mr. Winterbotham's saying in his sermon, that when there is a demand made in the

House of Commons for a supply, they deny it at first, and on a second demand, there are two-thirds, or three-fourths will grant it; and then they will share it among them?

A.—I do not recollect any such thing.

Q.—Do you recollect Mr. Winterbotham's saying his Majesty was placed upon the throne upon condition of keeping certain laws and rules?

A.—No, he said nothing about His Majesty throughout the sermon.

Q.—Did Mr. Winterbotham say we had as much right to stand up as they did in France for our liberties?

A.—I do not recollect he said anything like it.

WILLIAM LITTLE, the next witness for the Crown, was examined by Sergeant Rooke. He stated he was present at the sermon.

Q.—What do you recollect?

A.—Mr. Winterbotham spoke concerning the revolution of 1688, and in my opinion very much to the purpose. He mentioned the streets being crowded with poor, and said something about heavy taxes, but said nothing about oppressive laws or taxes.

This witness was cross-examined by Mr. Gibbs.

Q.—You are sure when Mr. Winterbotham was speaking of taxes he did not use the word "oppressive"?

A.—He said the taxes were heavy—but I do not remember that he said oppressive.

MARY CHANNENS was examined by Mr. Morris. In examination she stated that Mr. Winterbotham said *heavy* taxes. She was not cross-examined.

JOHN CHANNENS was examined by Serjeant Lawrence. This witness stated that Mr. Winterbotham said we had very good laws and very good members of Parliament, but they were chosen by a set of idle

and debauched people. Winterbotham also stated that His Majesty had not arbitrary power to demand anything of himself, and that the streets were crowded with vagrants, poor-houses with poor, and gaols with thieves because of the *oppressive* taxes.

This concluded the case for the Crown.

Mr. Vicary Gibbs opened the case for the defence. His defence was that:—

(1) In many instances the alleged seditious words were not spoken at all.

(2) Where they were spoken, or something like them, they bore an innocent construction.

(3) "The witnesses for the prosecution heard of the sermon and went to the meeting with the intention of finding something to incriminate Mr. Winterbotham; for in the whole course of the sermon they cannot, or will not, recollect a single passage that was not seditious."

(4) "Another very extraordinary circumstance is that none of them can recollect the text, which is generally the first object of every man's attention."

(5) "To say taxes are *oppressive, may be* seditious; but to say they are heavy, I contend, is not seditious." Paddon, Jago, John Channens, said the word used was *oppressive*. King, Little, Mary Channens, insisted the word was *heavy*.

(6) One Crown witness stated that Mr. Winterbotham said the laws were good, whilst another stated that he said the laws were bad.

(7) "His sermon has been garbled, and a few detached sentences, stripped of their connection, have been put together in one count and separated in others with a studied design to criminate him."

In one place Gibbs uttered a sentiment to the jury which he should have remembered in later years when

prosecuting Richard Carlile: "Although I acknowledge that I differ from Mr. Winterbotham in his political sentiments, yet I cannot desire to send fire and faggot to everyone who differs from me. If you, gentlemen of the jury, can, much good may it do you."

Eight witnesses were called for the defence. They stated that the text was Exodus xiii, 8: "Thou shalt show thy son in that day, saying, This is done because of that which the Lord did unto me." They denied that the defendant said anything about the French Revolution opening the eyes of the people of Britain, and insisted that he said *heavy* and *not* oppressive taxes.

SERGEANT ROOKE made the final speech to the jury, thus getting in the last word for the Crown. He defined the governing class attitude in the following amazing terms of grotesque and impudent tyranny:—

"The learned counsel for the defendant, has contended for the lawfulness of admitting political discussions from the pulpit, especially on the fifth of November; and said he thought it the duty of clergymen to point out where the principles of the Revolution of 1688 have been departed from.....If it was discussed in a fair, liberal, candid manner, I dare not say it is illegal, but I will say that the pulpit is a most improper place for discussing the subject of government, and that the clergy are of all people, the most incapable of the discussion, because their studies have a very different direction; and of all places this was the most improper, in an assembly of between two and three hundred of low, ignorant people.....

"I have observed in the course of this trial, that the defendant and some of his witnesses have been wandering to the principles of Revolution, and to the terms on which His Majesty holds his Crown—a subject that least of all becomes them or persons of their

situation to enquire into. The terms on which His Majesty holds his crown ought not to be the subject of investigation, for when once people come to make this a subject for discussion (even among the ablest men) and to reason and speculate on the great principles of government, they endanger the constitution, under which they have so long been happy, and which has been the envy of every surrounding nation. If this is the case, when the ablest and best men engage in the discussion, and I contend it is—what must be the consequence when the ignorant (of all people the most improper) begin to speculate on the high affairs of His Majesty?

"We have been told of pulling Majesty from the throne. The words we have heard to-day are, 'that the people of England did themselves justice, and hurled the Stuarts from the throne'—but this is not the way we should be taught to look up to the throne; on the contrary, we should look up to it with reverence and veneration.

"At the time of the Revolution, our ancestors were more cautious of its dignity, for the term they used was the term 'abdicated.'

"It is happy for us that they called in the proper family, but the less we examine into the principles on which they called it the better. We should confine ourselves to the constitution as it is at present, and give our governors credit for doing their duty.

"I desire to digress a little on the subject of the Rights of Man, which the philosophers of the age, the curse of the times, have so much spoken of; and I will venture to say that man has no rights whatever in opposition to the Supreme Being; and that man blasphemes who talks of having absolute rights independent of the Deity, who talks of rights in any other way than in subordination to the society in which he lives;

and yet these atheistic philosophers talk of the rights of man; while in a state of civil society man has no rights but what that society he lives in allows him. When these gentlemen, therefore, talk of standing forth in defence of their rights, they talk blasphemy to their Creator and treason to the Constitution."

THE HON. BARON PERRYN recited the words charged in the indictment and impartially stated the evidence of witnesses on both sides. He said the jury had to decide whether the defendant spoke the words laid in the indictment; if so, whether he spoke them with the sense laid in the indictment, that was, with an intention of exciting sedition. If they were not spoken, or if they were spoken in a different sense, the defendant was not guilty. It appeared to him (the learned judge) that this sermon might have been preached without any intention of exciting sedition, but it was certainly very improper, as it was delivered to some of the *lowest* class of people. It was also ill-timed, for His Majesty had lately issued a proclamation which ought to have cautioned the defendant, and he should have waived any such discussion at that period. The jury should put the best construction they could upon the matter and show the utmost levity in favour of the defendant.

After an absence of two hours and a half the jury brought in a verdict of "guilty."

. . . . . .

The indictment in the second trial was divided into six counts, repeating the same words several times, and accused the defendant of uttering the following alleged seditious words in his sermon: "Darkness has long cast her veil over the land; persecution and tyranny have carried universal sway; magisterial

powers have long been a scourge to the liberties and rights of the people. It does not matter by what name these usurped powers are known, whether by King, Senate, Potentate, or Stadholder, they are in either sense usurped. The yoke of bondage among our neighbours (meaning the French) seemed now to be pretty well broken, and it is expected the same blessing is awaiting us, when persecution and tyranny shall be no more ; when enjoying the liberties of a free people, we shall boast of having introduced among us that equality our neighbours have acquired."

SERGEANT ROOKE repeated the political sentiments with which he had edified the Court on the previous day and accused the defendant of exciting to rebellion and discontent by wickedly and absurdly preaching up equality to an audience unable to fathom the depth of political subjects and therefore easily deceived by specious pretences. This, when the mob had seized Paris, and thrown their king and queen into a dungeon.

EDWARD LYNE was called for the prosecution. He was examined by Sergeant Lawrence :—

Q.—Were you at the meeting in How's Lane on the evening of the 18th of November last?

A.—Yes. I went there with Mr. Darby in consequence of a report that Mr. Winterbotham had preached a seditious sermon on the fifth of November.

Q.—Were you there before the defendant began his sermon?

A.—Yes, we were ; we heard him begin.

Q.—Do you recollect the text he preached from?

A.—Yes, it was Rom. 13th ch., 12th ver. : "The night is far spent, the day is at hand, let us therefore cast off the works of darkness, and let us put on the armour of light."

Q.—How did he treat this text?

A.—After the preamble to his sermon, he said he felt himself bound by the present juncture of affairs to apply the text politically. [This witness here attributed the words recited in the indictment to Mr. Winterbotham.]

Q.—Did you ever take minutes of what you heard?

A.—Immediately on leaving the meeting, with those observations strongly impressed on my mind, I went home to my lodgings and there made minutes; and I am sure these are the very expressions the defendant used.

Cross-Examined by Mr. Gibbs.

Q.—Pray, Mr. Lyne, how came you to go to the meeting on the evening on which this sermon was preached?

A.—I went with Mr. Darby in consequence of the rumours which were circulated respecting the former sermon.

Q.—You say you went in consequence of certain rumours which had been circulated respecting the former sermon. I would ask you if you believed those rumours?

A.—No, I disbelieved the report.

Q.—I believe you are not one of Mr. Winterbotham's congregation?

A.—No, I am not.

Q.—Then as you are not in the habit of attending Mr. Winterbotham, and as you disbelieved the reports in circulation respecting the former sermon, I would ask you what were the motives with which you went on that evening?

A.—I went as a friend of Mr. Winterbotham, to take his part—that I might have an opportunity to defend him against the accusations circulating concerning him.

Q.—You say you went as the friend of Mr. Winterbotham, that you might have an opportunity to take his part—that was your motive for going?

A.—Yes, and if I had thought he would have been prosecuted I would not have gone.

Q.—Then it was your general Christian philanthropy that led you to the meeting as a friend of Mr. Winterbotham?

A.—Yes, it was my general Christian philanthropy that led me to go there.

Q.—As a friend of Mr. Winterbotham, I would ask you what is your opinion of the whole of the sermon?

A.—I considered the whole of the sermon as totally seditious.

Q.—Was there any part of it but what was seditious?

A.—There were many moral and religious sentiments, but the whole in a chain was seditious.

Q.—Pray, how long do you think Mr. Winterbotham was in preaching this sermon?

A.—About three quarters of an hour.

Q.—And though you went to the meeting as a friend of Mr. Winterbotham, and though Mr. Winterbotham was three-quarters of an hour in preaching, you do not recollect any passage in the discourse that was not seditious?

A.—At that time I did not wish to recollect any that were not seditious.

Q.—Though you were the friend of Mr. Winterbotham, you had no wish to retain any passage in your memory but those you thought seditious?

A.—I endeavoured to retain in my mind those which were so strong.

Q.—But you don't recollect any other sentence in the whole sermon, but those you have given in evidence?

A.—I can't repeat any other sentence.

Q.—I think you said if you had thought Mr. Winterbotham would have been prosecuted, you should not have attended. Pray, how came you then to be an evidence?

A.—When he said he should treat his subject politically, I then determined to attend to what he said, intending to take part against him if called upon.

Q.—Pray, in what manner did Mr. Winterbotham begin his sermon?

A.—He gave a moral exposition of the text at first, but I don't remember what he said, neither the words nor the tenor of them.

Q.—Then there was nothing seditious in the first part of the sermon?

A.—I really think the first exposition of the text was such as any clergyman might have used in any place of devotion.

Q.—But you don't remember anything of this part of the subject which you think is unexceptionable?

A.—I cannot repeat any sentence, I did not endeavour to store in my mind any part of it.

Q.—Though you went to the meeting as a friend of Mr. Winterbotham, and for the express purpose of vindicating him from what you conceive to be false accusations, yet you did not endeavour to store in your mind any sentence of that part of the sermon which you conceived to be unexceptionable?

A.—No, I did not.

Q.—Did you see Mr. Darby at any time afterwards that evening?

A.—Yes, Mr. Darby came to me that same night.

Q.—And then I suppose you made minutes?

A.—Mr. Darby did not then see the minutes I had made.

Q.—Has he ever seen them since?

A.—Yes, perhaps in the space of ten days after, or it might be a shorter space.

Q.—Then you had no communication with Mr. Darby that night about the sermon. You did not say anything to him that you had made minutes of it?

A.—I had no communication about the minutes. I only expressed my resentment to Mr. Darby.

Q.—Pray, what are you?

A.—I am clerk to the collector of excise at Plymouth.

John Derby was Examined by Mr. Fanshawe.

Q.—Were you at the meeting at How's Lane on the 18th of November?

A.—Yes, I went there with Mr. Lyne.

Q.—Do you remember who preached?

A.—Yes, Mr. Winterbotham preached. The text was Rom. xiii, 8.

Q.—And what did he say about the text?

A.—He made some observations which I did not attend to; and then said, at this juncture it was necessary to apply it politically.

(This witness here recited the words of the indictment as Lyne did in his evidence.)

Q.—Are you certain that what you have given in evidence are the defendant's exact words?

A.—I am certain it was the sense if not the exact words.

He was Cross-Examined by Mr. East.

Q.—Did you make any minutes of what you heard?

A.—I made no minutes at that time, but have done it since.

Q.—Pray, was what you have given in evidence connected together in one connected sentence?

A.—These expressions which I have stated did not follow each other immediately.

Q.—How long was it before you took minutes?

A.—The day after the sermon.

Q.—When did you see Mr. Lyne's notes?

A.—The next day.

Q.—Then the minutes you made were copied from Mr. Lyne's?

A.—Mr. Lyne's minutes recalled the words to my recollection.

Q.—How came you by Mr. Lyne's minutes?

A.—I asked him for them; that which I recollected I copied merely for my own satisfaction.

Q.—You had no idea then that you should be called on as evidence?

A.—At that time I had no idea of a prosecution.

He was Cross-Examined by Mr. Gibbs.

Q.—As you only copied from Mr. Lyne's minutes what you recollected to have been spoken, those words must at the time of their delivery, have made a very deep impression on your mind?

A.—I never heard a sermon that struck me so forcibly.

Q.—What were the parts that made such an impression?

A.—I do not recollect the particular parts.

Q.—I believe there were no particular parts but what you found in Mr. Lyne's minutes?

A.—There was a part of Mr. Lyne's minutes I did not copy: What passed after I left the meeting.

Q.—You copied all that was in Mr. Lyne's minutes that was said before you left the meeting?

A.—I did copy all that part.

Q.—How long were you at the meeting?

A.—About twenty minutes.

Q.—And you take upon you to swear that what you

have given in evidence were Mr. Winterbotham's identical words?

A.—I do not say the defendant used the identical words, but only words to that tendency.

Q.—What are you?

A.—Midshipman in the navy, and my reason for going to the meeting was I had heard of the sermon on the 5th of November.

Mr. Gibbs addressed the jury for the Defence. He said, in part: "A miracle was once stated to have happened relative to the translation of the Septuagint. Seventy old men were put into different cells to translate the testament, and they all translated it in the same words. It is necessary for the jury to believe that the same kind of miracle has again happened, if they think that the two witnesses for the Crown, one of them a clerk to the collector of excise, the other a midshipman in the navy, could both go to a meeting, hear a sermon preached which lasted three-quarters of an hour, come out again, collect a great number of sentences in the sermon, retain them in their memory, and come here nine months afterwards and repeat them precisely in the same words. This I have not the stomach to digest.

"One of the witnesses took notes of the particular passages, which the others saw and copied; yet he said he did not speak from them, but from his own recollection of what passed at the time. If that witness spoke from what he copied from the notes of the other, all his evidence is to be left out of the case.

"It has been stated that the defendant had preached a sermon on the 5th of November, which had in many points been greatly misrepresented and about which he must have expected a prosecution. Yet these witnesses pretend that he went into the same pulpit and preached another sermon on the 18th which would bring him

again within the reach of the law. It is certainly improbable.

"The witnesses for the prosecution are both young men, the latter at least not very likely to carry off in his memory such a string of sentences as those he repeated. On the credit of these witnesses I shall not much trouble the jury. Mr. Lyne gave such an account that I think he could not well be believed. He said that not being of the sect to which Mr. Winterbotham belonged, and having before heard that Mr. Winterbotham had preached a seditious sermon on the 5th of November, he went to this meeting, hoping and not doubting but that he should find an opportunity to contradict the injurious reports which had been circulated relative to the sermon, which Mr. Winterbotham had before preached. He told the jury that it was his general Christian philanthropy that brought him there, thinking Mr. Winterbotham would not again preach a seditious sermon; and that by the defendant's not preaching a political sermon, then he should be able to convince the people that he had not before preached seditiously. Is this evidence credible or consistent? Can the jury believe that this man attended there for the purpose of finding an exculpation of Mr. Winterbotham, and yet should not recollect a single passage in the whole sermon, but what had a contrary tendency? He went there not with a view to excuse but to defend; his attention then must have been to those points of the sermon which would rather exculpate than accuse Mr. Winterbotham. We generally attend to what we wish, and yet the witness could remember no one passage in the course of the defendant's sermon but those which he had given in evidence to criminate him and which Mr. Darby had echoed back to Mr. Lyne again."

Seven witnesses were called for the defence. They

denied that Mr. Winterbotham had uttered the words attributed to him.

SERGEANT ROOKE, closing for the Crown, addressed the jury for an hour and a half, indulging in his usual curious invective and declamation.

THE HON. BARON PERRYN, addressing the jury, observed that two witnesses had been called for the prosecution, both young men. The jury must dismiss the testimony of one of these witnesses (Mr. Darby), for though the other witness, Mr. Lyne, had said that he did not communicate his notes to him for several days, yet Mr. Darby acknowledged that he copied his minutes from Mr. Lyne's on the next day after the sermon was preached ; and this is further corroborated by his having given his evidence in Mr. Lyne's words. The support of the charges would rest then on the testimony of one youth.

Under all the circumstances, the judge did not believe the prisoner guilty.

After an absence of five hours, the jury returned a verdict of Guilty ! ! !

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Mr. Winterbotham surrendered himself for judgment on November 21, 1793, and was committed to Newgate, pending sentence. On the 27th Mr. Justice Ashurst sentenced him to four years' imprisonment and a fine of £200.

A fortnight before this sentence was pronounced Sergeant Rooke became Sir Giles Rooke and was appointed to a judgeship. This man was born in 1743 and, after being educated at Harrow and Oxford, became a barrister in 1766. He was *not* made a Sergeant until April, 1793, only a short time before his prosecution of Winterbotham. Recognition was late

in coming, though its speed was equal to Rooke's ability, but he had the cunning to extend it once it arrived. By dying in 1808 this individual merely left a vacant place for other aspiring and conspiring placemen of corruption.

Such a state of affairs was not to be cured by Sheridan's Parliamentary eloquence and its eulogy of the system and protest of loyal constitutionalism, by Fox's censures of Pitt, Robert Hall's academic liberalism and religiosity, or Erskine's legal quibbling. After tasting the fruits of office and Lord Chancellorship, Erskine, too cowardly to struggle and too honest to condone indefinitely, became a wit and a man of pleasure to soothe his troubled conscience. All knew that Vicary Gibbs' defence of Winterbotham was the natural prelude to disgraceful succession to and actual outstripping of Sergeant Rooke as a persecuting attorney. The only way to check such a system of oppression was to challenge and defy as Carlile did. Carlile, in his genius, knew this. Compare his stand with that of Winterbotham and realize that he did much more than assert the right to publish Paine's writings. His trials and the impertinent decisions of his judges marked the culmination of an epoch of legal terror. The capitalist judiciary will never recover from the mortal wounds he dealt it. Men will enquire again and again into the character and reward of his judges, will scorn and ridicule their interested judgments, until at last the nightmare of authority and despotism is over and the world wakes from its troubled sleep to the realities of equality and freedom. The splendour of Carlile's struggle and all its consequences has been glimpsed merely. One day it will be understood.

VI.—Carlile Turns Publisher.

In February, 1811, Carlile's apprenticeship expired and he left Exeter to work in London, and worked as a journeyman at Holborn Hill. June found him out of work as trade was slack and he was one of the youngest hands. He returned to Exeter and worked there until December. He then went to Plymouth, Portsmouth, and Gosport, and finally reached London again in August, 1813. Once again seated in the manufactory on Holborn Hill, he never left it until he turned publisher. The story of how he did this is best related by himself :—

"I shared the general distress of 1816, and it was this that opened my eyes. Having my attention drawn to politics I began to read everything I could get at upon the subject with avidity, and I soon saw what was the importance of the Free Press. Then for the first time I began to read the *Examiner, News,* and *Independent Whig* newspapers, but fancied that they did not go far enough with it. I had the same opinion of Mr. Cobbett's twopenny sheets, of Hone's Register, and, indeed, of all that was published in 1816. In the manufactories nothing was talked of but revolution, and I soon became so far fired as to begin to build castles in the air. I attended the public meetings, and felt an attachment to Henry Hunt, as what I thought the best and boldest man, for he then took care to let no one go before him. As well as to read I began to scribble, as I wanted to be doing something in the great cause as I saw it then. I annoyed the editors of several papers with my effusions, particularly the editors of the *Whig* and the *News,* but every answer was that it was too strong or violent. From none

except the *News* could I get a notice as a correspondent. There I felt highly honoured with a couple of notices to correspondents. 'A half-employed mechanic is too violent.' And an answer to 'Cincinnatus' about the propriety and existence of political tract societies. It was something to be noticed, though the pieces were rejected. Oh, if I could get a half-sheet pamphlet of my own writing printed, it was to be a novelty in politics, and my fortune assuredly made. I wrote something for Mr. Hone's Register with the motto: 'Gold and silver have I none; but such as I have I give unto thee.' This piece obtained me no notice even as a correspondent. Mr. Cobbett was annoyed with a very foolish poetical or rather rhyming effusion, an acrostic on the name of Hunt. Hunt himself was not spared, for I paced the front of his hotel in Covent Garden for a couple of hours one evening before I could muster resolution or put on a face to ask the waiter to give him a letter that I had written, and all I dreaded was being called before him! I soared higher, and addressed the Lord Chancellor himself, not in an anonymous letter, but with real name and address, and demanded, in what Mr. Cobbett would call an imperious tone, that he, as a Privy Counsellor, should advise a reform. I felt a poignant distress, and was ready to run at anything to relieve it. This was the beginning of my career, in 1816. I was an enthusiast, but with the best intention and anxiety to do more good than I saw doing.

"In 1817 *The Black Dwarf* made its appearance, which happened to be much more to my taste than Mr. Cobbett's *Register*. Having purchased the first two numbers, and lent them to as many of my fellow-workmen as would read them, and got them almost illegibly black, I wrote a letter, and enclosed them to George Canning, and requested him, after he had read

them, to hand them over to Castlereagh for the green bag that was then on the table of the House of Commons, particularly pointing out to him how well they had been read as was evident from their appearance. Mr. Sherwin next made his appearance under the title of *Republican,* but I found more in his title than in his pages.

"Mr. Sherwin was once the keeper of Southwell Bridewell in Northamptonshire, in succession to his father, who filled that office many years so much to the satisfaction of that town that at the death of his father, Mr. Sherwin, although but fourteen years of age, was appointed to the office under the superintendence of the parson justices. Prior to this he had been sent to an attorney's office. He continued in this situation for above three years, and in the course of this time being much addicted to study in literature, as well as the arts and sciences, he met with some portion of the writings of Paine, and was so much struck with them as unhesitatingly to avow himself the disciple of Paine in politics. This, of course, gave great offence to the magistrates who superintended the Bridewell, and Mr. Sherwin's politics occasioned his removal from this place. Being then under eighteen years of age, and a strong political feeling existing in the country in 1816-17, Mr. Sherwin came to London and presented a political pamphlet he had written to Mr. Hone and other publishers, and they were all afraid of it as too strong. The pamphlet was thrown by, and Mr. Sherwin soon perceived that he could do nothing in his political career unless he got a printing press and turned printer and publisher himself. This an ardent mind soon accomplished. Disappointed, but not damped, having some property, he took a portion of an auction room in Fleet Street, at 183, the windows of which were not wanted for the auctioneer.

Here he commenced his *Republican,* but finding the title objectionable to a few friends, he, without giving it a fair trial, changed it in six weeks to *Weekly Political Register.* Thus originated Mr. Sherwin, who was certainly my coadjutor in getting me fairly before the public. Nor can I see how I could have got on without him.

"The Habeas Corpus Act being suspended, and Sidmouth having sent forth his circular to the magistrates, all was terror and alarm, but I take credit to myself in defeating the effect of those two Acts upon the Press, I saw nearly all the political tract-sellers of 1816 shrink from the sale of even Cobbett's *Register.* This was a matter of astonishment to me, as I looked upon it as a mere milk and water paper compared with the *Black Dwarf* and some of the newspapers. Mr. Cobbett's own writing exhibited evident alarm, and this made me indignant. I resolved to get into the front of the battle and to set the best possible example in the trade of Political Pamphlets. These were the reasonings of my individual mind, then unconnected with and unknown to every public man. Of imprisonment I made sure; but I felt inclined rather to court it than to shrink from it.

"On March 9, 1817, I borrowed a pound note from my employer and went and purchased 100 Dwarfs, stating to Mr. Steill, the publisher, what my object was. The *Dwarf* was then at an almost unprofitable number, and it was a question about giving it up. However, I traversed the metropolis in every direction to find new shops to sell them, and called every day to see how they sold, and the same with Mr. Sherwin's *Republican,* not forgetting Southey's twopenny *Wat Tyler.* My ardour was not to be damped by any danger or difficulty. I persevered, and many a day traversed thirty miles for a profit of eighteen-pence. I

soon found myself a welcome hand, both to Mr. Sherwin and to Mr. Wooler's publisher, and here I can give proof of my singular spirit on this occasion. Though I knew that Mr. Cobbett's *Register* outsold the other publications beyond all comparison, I refused to carry it, or did not apply for it, because it was not strong enough and did not come up to my notions of right. 'Why don't you bring us Cobbett's *Register*?' said many of the shopkeepers. 'You will get more by carrying that about than these.' 'No,' said I, 'I shall have nothing to do with that.' Nor did I, until I had a shop of my own.

"I had not carried round the *Black Dwarf* many weeks before there was an *ex-officio* information against the publisher, and Mr. Steill was arrested. I instantly offered my services to fill his place, but found that they were not exactly wanted, as Mr. Steill, by consent, giving up the editor, Mr. Wooler got off himself.

"Up to April, 1817, I continued in my avocation of journeyman mechanic, although I had commenced the sale of pamphlets on March 9. I did not leave my employ on precarious ground and not until Mr. Sherwin had informed himself of my disposition and views, and came into the manufactory where I spent part of my time to make me an offer of his shop and the publication of his *Register*.

"This, I felt, was a grand point gained, and henceforth I saw my way clear. I embraced his offer without hesitation, and the consequence is well known. At near eight years distance I remain a prisoner!

"I entered the shop, 183 Fleet Street, in April, 1817, not as a servant or partner of Mr. Sherwin's, but in addition to the publication of his *Register*, I was to make the best use I could of it, as the rent of £3 per month fell entirely on me. As the publisher of Mr.

Sherwin's *Political Register*, and as the person responsible for the publication, it was I who urged him on to that strength of writing and sometimes even violence which he subsequently assumed, and which I knew was calculated to keep up the other political writings to something near the standard. I may look upon myself as the author of all bold writing, for it was the work of my responsibility, and he was always encouraged by me to go his full length under a pledge that I would never give him up as the author unless he wished it. This fearless responsibility on my part brought the *Gorgon* into existence, and evidently led to many other spirited publications.

"Mr. Hone published his parodies early in the year 1817, but as soon as they were denounced in the House of Commons as blasphemous because they imitated the style of some holy writings, he withdrew them from sale, carefully gathering them up from every shop that had required them for sale. However, this did not screen him from the Attorney-General's informations. He was prosecuted and imprisoned in the King's Bench Prison for want of bail, at the same time with Mr. Wooler. Mr. Wooler was brought to trial and defeated Mr. Attorney-General; and Mr. Hone obtained his liberation with the understanding that the prosecution would drop. However, the parodies were suppressed, and there was a great demand for them. This did not suit my taste and object at all. I resolved to reprint the Parodies, and so valuable were they considered from the suppression, that I found some difficulty to get at copies. I was then transacting business and known well at Mr. Hone's shop, but I could not get a set from that quarter, and I believe the same conduct was uniformly observed to every inquirer, for I knew that great prices were offered for them, even £1 for each two-

penny pamphlet, and I also know that a gentleman in Lincoln's Inn gave five guineas for the five parodies that Mr. Hone had suppressed. Mr. Hone was liberated about the end of June, or beginning of July, and the parodies still suppressed. At length I obtained copies and put them to Press instantly, and on August 7 I hoisted my placards and announced to the astonished public the suppressed parodies for sale, and I believe that I am right when I say that this was the first time that ever an individual bade defiance to the veto of the Attorney-General upon any publication whatever.

"I was menaced by Mr. Hone for having infringed his copyright although he had relinquished all idea of profit from it! I was threatened with a process in the Ecclesiastical Court, in the Spiritual Court, by injunction in the Court of Chancery, in the King's Devil's Court, and I know not what other courts, but I laughed at all menace, kept my colours flying, and the parodies selling; and on August 14 I was arrested on three judges' warrants, and, in default of £800 bail, was sent to the King's Bench Prison; but Mrs. Carlile continued the sale of the Parodies in defiance of all prosecution. I continued in the King's Bench Prison until December 20, a period of eighteen weeks, when on the successive acquittals of Mr. Hone I was liberated on my recognisances of £300. During this period of my confinement I was condemned by all persons and parties for being so violent, but I have always felt the inward satisfaction that whatever good arose from Mr. Hone's defence and acquittals, I was the mainspring of producing that good. I felt disgusted to see the charge of blasphemy brought against such simple, such ridiculous publications, and I soon resolved to put the question to an issue, and although it occasioned me a great loss, and Mr. Hone a very

great gain, both he and the public are indebted to me for having brought him into court. He would have made any concession or compromise to have avoided the prosecution, but it was in vain. He was the first publisher, and although he had completely suppressed his own publication, still the copies of them were in full sale at my shop.

"Fairly before the public as a publisher, I began to care less about writing scraps of my own, seeing that I was in the right channel for improvement and ultimate distinction. Through 1817 and 1818 I wrote nothing but a few prefaces, the contents of placards, two or three articles for Mr. Sherwin's *Register,* signed 'Plebian,' and while a prisoner in the King's Bench Prison for the publication of the Parodies on the Liturgy—a parody on the Communion Service, entitled *Loaves and Fishes,* etc. In 1819 I had not an idea of becoming a regular writer before my imprisonment for the publication of the *Age of Reason* and *Principles of Nature.* The starting of the *Republican* was the work of a moment. Mr. Sherwin, seeing me likely to go to prison, and himself likely to be more exposed, having then got married, was induced to give up all the dangerous part of his career with me, and when matters began to look serious after the Manchester massacre, he came to me to say that he should give up his *Register* and that I might take it up with the same or any title, as I liked. I did not hesitate a moment, but gave it the title of *The Republican.*

"This brings me to the commencement of my career as a public writer."

VII.—Iron Purpose and Espionage.

Carlile's first ideas of politics were that neither writers, printers, nor publishers were bold enough. He was justified in this opinion by the fact that no advanced bookseller or publisher escaped the terror that was the order of the day, the fear that was a portion of the atmosphere. Cobbett was foremost in spreading it abroad. He had suffered two years' imprisonment for condemning flogging in the navy and enjoyed a brave reputation in consequence. Yet he fled to America. Thus it came about in 1817 that Carlile was compelled as well as impelled to set the example he thought wanted. It must be acknowledged that he jumped at the opportunity. He now stood forth, the one bold spirit of his time, surrounded by weaklings and opposed to cowardly despots. The mantle of liberty fell gracefully on his shoulders. He became its prophet. The honour of vindicating the common people's right to knowledge was to be his. An incarnation of the Genius of Anarchy, the Spirit of Future Freedom, he was to pioneer most ably the emancipation of mankind from the twin-evils of authority and property.

If Emerson was right when he declared that "He only is a well-made man who has a good determination," Carlile was a well-made man. No heart vibrated more strongly to the iron-key—"Trust thyself!"—than his.

If Beecher was right when he avowed that "He is rich or poor according to what he is, not according to what he has," no man of Carlile's generation was richer than he. Without money, and possessing no

property beyond his firm resolve and his interest in the cause of Freedom, he vanquished an organized Terrorism, supported by property, put into operation by the Government and the Church, and loudly defended and extolled in a subsidized Press.

The hatred of the governing class of his day was lavished upon him. Contemporary with so many famous men who cringed before power, and compromised with despotism, he alone remained incorruptible.

This is no rhetoric. It is a literal truth. Always in the vanguard when liberty's defence was in the danger-zone, he endured privation and imprisonment —he experienced want from the cradle to the grave— but he enriched the psychological records of the race: he added his own name to the list of heroes who had served humanity.

In the best and truest sense of the term, he was a successful man. He was himself. No man nor woman could fall under the sway of his personality and remain a slave. They were immediately emancipated. Hence his shopmen and shopwomen.

Than him, the world has never had—nor will it have—a nobler, bolder, more single-eyed prophet of liberty. Atheist and Red Republican—practical in his outlook on social ordinances—almost Communist in his recognition of the class-war existent in society—he was above all things, and because of his qualities in these respects, a man. His like will be, *must* be, seen again ere the Social Revolution is accomplished. But the man will never be excelled.

Holyoake well says of him: "When Carlile's days of thinking began, he began with himself. He knew himself well, and this was the source of his strength. Like Cobbett he could write always well of himself. His first study was to form a mind of his own on the

basis of the best known principles. Carlile began to write a man. Nature made him for an agitator. He had an iron will and limitless self-reliance.....Carlile always wrote with manifest purpose and seems to have emulated the plain vigour of Cobbett and the invective of Junius."

Thus, during his eighteen week's imprisonment for reprinting Hone's parodies, he amused himself by producing a parody of the Anglican Communion Service, which he published immediately on his release. The title-page of this pamphlet reads as follows :—

> The *Order* for the *Administration* of the *Loaves and Fishes;* or, *The Communion* of *Corruption's Host.*—Translated from an Original Greek Manuscript, lately discovered in the Neighbourhood of a certain *Den of Thieves,* in Westminster.—*London:* Printed and Published by R. Carlile, late of *Law's Hold,* in the County of Surrey, but now of 183, Fleet Street; and sold by those who are not afraid of incurring the displeasure of his Majesty's Ministers, their Spies or Informers, or public plunderers of any denomination.—1817.

This "183 Fleet Street," was subsequently occupied by Cobbett and Carlile passed on to "55." It was here that he was menaced with espionage and secret conspiracy. Carlile tells the story himself :—

"I revere the name of Thomas Paine ; the image of his honest countenance is constantly before me. I have him in bust, in whole length figure, for which I may thank the late government of Liverpool, Castlereagh, and Sidmouth, who appointed Edwards the spy to his task, he, who when he failed to get me hanged, caused the death of Thistlewood and others. Edwards occupied *six months* of 1819, in excuse of making this statue to keep at my heels. He followed me closely

until I was in Dorchester Gaol. There I escaped him, and then, immediately, he was put on to other game with which he succeeded. I had a clear-sighted purpose of my own, and thus I frustrated the acquaintance which Liverpool, Castlereagh, Sidmouth, and their spy Edwards, wished to bring me into with Jack Ketch. I found Edwards a tradesman in Fleet Street, as an artist, before I got there, and so I became his next-door neighbour. He succeeded, in occupation, the shop which William Hone had, and where he published his famous parodies. When I came to No. 55, in January, 1819, Edwards had been two years at No. 56, so I had little ground to suspect his spyship. I had known him as a customer through that time. He pleaded that his father had been an old politician ; nor was my suspicion excited by his having a brother in the Hatton Garden Police. When I entered upon No. 55, he pleaded what a great convenience it would be to his business if I would allow him to lodge in my house, as he had a shop next door without a dwelling-house. I had almost yielded, but the shrewd suspicions of Mrs. Carlile, re-acting upon his villainous countenance, put it aside. He was then placed in an upper story lodging of the opposite house (where was born my statue of Paine) in the under part of which was placed a man of the name of John Carlisle, a bookseller, to oppose me, in conflict with another class of publications. This was the work of the Government, superintended by their agent, John Reeve.

"Edwards did not scruple to talk to me about meeting the Archbishop of Canterbury in Windsor Castle, but left me to infer that it was about his art as a modeller, not as a spy. I can now see that he was placed in Hone's old shop to keep out a political publisher ; and I have since divined a deep history of the spy system of that time, which I never feared, because

I had nothing morally to fear in what I purposed to do. From, or in the house of John Carlisle, by Edwards, was concocted the plot called the Cato Street Conspiracy. In beginning, middle, and end, that was wholly the work of Lords Castlereagh and Sidmouth, with Edwards as an agent. After the finish of that political tragedy, Edwards was provided for in one of the colonies, it has been said, the Cape of Good Hope. John Carlisle dwindled into great poverty in Fleet Street, was made permanent constable, and at last very strangely got his house burned down, just after I came triumphantly from six years' imprisonment in Dorchester Gaol, and established myself *ruinously* in splendid No. 62."

Not only was the agent-provocateur employed to trap the enthusiast but the political victim was deprived of legal defence, if he was foolish enough to desire it. "The humble advocate," says Holyoake, was bullied into the abandonment of his political client and the powerful one was bribed. Mr. Cooper was frowned into silence and threatened. Mr. Cross obtained a silk gown for his *defence* of Brandeth, and Mr. Justice Best won the same distinction by his *defence* of Despard." Knowing that the Crown was watching them, advocates for the defence calculated on this espionage to secure advancement to the plums of their profession. The man who urged the truth and did not press a career followed his client into the dock and jail as a menace to the safety of the realm.

"Yet it was in such times," says Holyoake elsewhere, "and amid such dangers that Carlile formed the resolution, and adhered to it to the day of his death, never to cease any publication so long as any prosecution or intimidation menaced it. Placing himself always where danger was to be braved, his position was from the first prominent, and attracted to him

many leading political characters, who saw in him a vicarious sacrifice for that freedom they were willing to enjoy, if it could be done without paying so troublesome a price as the ministers of that day charged for it. But, as the danger grew imminent, they began to pull him back and condemn his open conduct."

Hunt repudiated him at a time when Carlile, from the prison-house, was defending that gentleman at every point against his political persecutors. Cobbett at first said : " You have done your duty bravely Mr. Carlile ; if every one had done like you, it would have been all very well." But Cobbett soon repented this honest praise and denounced Carlile without mercy. Wooler insisted that the publication of Paine's work would stop all the political writings of the day, as they menaced freedom by their extreme contentions. Carlile rightly declared that a century later they would appear too mild. Major Cartwright, honoured as an upright political reformer and grand old man of liberty, deprecated the republication of Paine's works as mischievous, as flying in the face of juries ; that when a jury had once declared these works to be libels, the very errors of that jury ought to be respected. Yet against this dictum of the influential veteran reformer Carlile contended successfully and powerfully. " Indictments and warrants have never affected me," he said proudly, " they have been the life of my business."

VIII.—Peterloo.

Present at the famous Peterloo meeting that was to have been addressed by Henry Hunt—the Parliamentary Reformer—on Monday, August 15, 1819, Carlile witnessed the massacre of defenceless women and children by the Yeomanry and police. No less than 300,000 people—men, women, and children—were assembled in and about the intended place of meeting, in a perfectly orderly and quiet manner. Mr. Hunt had began his discourse, and made some ironical observations upon the conduct of the magistrates in attempting to forbid the meeting, when, says Carlile: "A cart, which evidently took its direction from that part of the field where the police and magistrates were assembled in a house, was moved through the middle of the field, to the great annoyance and danger of the assembled people, who quietly endeavoured to make way for its procedure. The cart had no sooner made its way through, than the Yeomanry Cavalry made their appearance from the same quarter as the cart had gone out. They galloped furiously round the field, and, after a moment's pause, they received the cheers of the police as a signal for attack.....The Yeomanry Cavalry made their charge with the most infuriate frenzy; they cut down women and children indiscriminately, and appeared to have commenced a premeditated attack with the most insatiable thirst for blood and destruction. They merit a medallion on the one side of which should be inscribed 'The Slaughtermen of Manchester,' and a reverse, bearing a description of their slaughter of defenceless men, women, and children. Every stone was gathered from the ground on the Friday and Saturday previous to the meeting by the scavengers

sent there by the express command of the magistrates that the populace might be rendered more defenceless.....The police were as expert in applying their clubs to the heads and shoulders of the people as the cavalry their sabres.....One woman, who was near the spot where I stood and who held an infant in her arms, was sabred over the head, and her tender offspring drenched in its mother's blood. Another was actually stabbed in the neck with the point of the sabre, which must have been a deliberate attempt on the part of the military assassin. Some were sabred in the breast—so inhuman and fiendlike was the conduct of the Manchester cavalry."

This account of the Peterloo massacre was not published some years after the event, but it was immediately issued in the form of an open letter to Lord Sidmouth, the Home Secretary, whom Carlile used as a medium for supplying the public with the account of an eye-witness, at the same time calling upon him "to cause the magistrates of Manchester, and the Yeomanry and Cavalry acting under their directions, to be brought to the Bar of Public Justice, for the unprovoked slaughter of the peaceable and distressed inhabitants of that place and neighbourhood, whilst legally exercising their rights in public meeting assembled."

Carlile then proceeded to add with characteristic fearlessness, that "in the event of the Government failing to give satisfaction to the full extent of their means and power to the mangled and suffering, and to the friends of the *murdered inhabitants* of Manchester, the people, not only of Manchester, but of the whole country, are in duty bound and by the laws of Nature imperatively called upon to provide themselves against the attacks of similar assassins acting in the true Castlereaghan fashion."

This *Open Letter* was considered carefully by the Home Secretary, to whom it was addressed, Sir John Silvester, Recorder of London, and John Atkins, Lord Mayor. This council of three decided that, in view of the state of public feeling, it was unwise to advertise Carlile's vigorous impeachment by basing a charge of High Treason upon it.

Whilst they were thus employing their time, the Prince Regent, acting upon the advice of his Cabinet, addressed a letter to the magistrates of Manchester, and all the officers and privates concerned in the Peterloo massacres, recording the Royal gratitude "to them" for having so promptly preserved the peace and tranquillity of the county.

Carlile replied to this piece of monarchial, governing-class insolence in two further letters addressed to the Regent and to Lord Sidmouth respectively. In these replies he spared neither the throne nor the Government. He simply spoke his mind—the mind of a friend of Freedom.

IX.—Mock Justice.

Richard Carlile, once established as a publisher and bookseller, published Thomas Paine's *Age of Reason* and Elihu Palmer's *Principles of Nature* because they had been repeatedly condemned as blasphemous publications. He felt it incumbent upon him to republish them and to maintain their circulation in vindication of the absolute freedom of the Press. The result was the famous mock trials of 1819.

On January 12, 1819, the Government commenced its campaign of indictment against him for blasphemy,

based on his publication of Paine's and Palmer's writings. Brought before the Court of King's Bench, at the Guildhall, on Tuesday, June 15, 1819, he set a splendid example of courage, which many agitators of later years have failed to imitate, whereas it is a caution for "blasphemers" and "seditionists" to promise not to repeat their "incitements" or "libels" pending trial, in order to secure release on bail, Carlile refused to make any such compromise. His reason is explained in the following discussion:—

Mr. Justice Bailey: I recollect the defendant being brought to my chambers for this indictment, and that a promise of forbearance was made to him, provided he would give an undertaking to discontinue the sale, and that the defendant refused to give an undertaking to that effect.

Richard Carlile: I conceived, my lord, that the publication could not be considered an offence, until a jury had decided to do so.

Mr. Justice Best: You may be wrong there.

Leigh Hunt devoted several editorials in his *Examiner* to a defence of Carlile's attitude in this matter and challenged the judges to state whether they would have a conscientious man regard his conduct as an offence merely because he is told so, and menaced with the threats of those in power? Meanwhile, Carlile continued the sale of his publications, and by August 21, 1819, had to answer to five indictments for blasphemous libel.

On this date he was arrested for sedition on account of his further letters to the Regent and Lord Sidmouth on the Manchester massacre. He spent six days in the Giltspur Street Compter, and was then released on bail, the magistrate intimating that if he undertook to withdraw from circulation his accounts of the Manchester massacre no further proceedings would be

taken against him. Carlile did not comply with this request. Thus defied, the Government was unwilling to answer Carlile's impeachment by further canvassing accounts of its tyranny by proceeding on the sedition charge. But it remembered that Carlile enjoyed his liberty, on bail, on the blasphemy charge. Hitherto it had shown no disposition to bring the indictments under this charge to a head. Now it proceeded with them in great haste.

. . . . . .

Richard Carlile was charged on an *ex-officio* information of the Attorney-General, Sir Robert Gifford, at the Court of King's Bench, Guildhall, before Lord Chief Justice Abbott and a jury, on Tuesday, October 12, 1819, with being a wicked, impious, and ill-disposed person, who had caused to be printed and published a scandalous and blasphemous libel of, and concerning, the Old Testament. There were eleven counts to the indictment, composed of passages from this work. Carlile conducted his own case.

The nature of the information having been stated, Carlile said that he should require the passages to be read at length at the proper time. Chief Justice Abbott agreed that this should be done if the defendant considered it material, but protested that it was unusual to do so.

Attorney-General Gifford then opened the case for the Crown. He observed, with great satisfaction, that when the jury knew the nature of the charge they would be satisfied that the prosecution did not proceed from any hostility to the liberty of the Press. On the contrary, the Officer of the Crown would have been negligent of his duty had he refrained from filing the information. By their very oaths the jury had pledged themselves to the belief of Christianity. It

was idle for him to descant upon its excellence therefore. To discuss its veracity was to deny its constitutional authority and to admit that it might be discussed in the manner that had given rise to the present proceedings. Not to be convicted, the defendant must abolish the Constitution and persuade the jury to ignore the solemn obligation they had taken in the name of their Creator.

Defendant had been prosecuted only according to Common Law, but he had also violated Statute Law. Parliamentary enactments showed that blasphemy had always been considered a criminal offence. There was the case of Taylor, who, in the reign of Charles II, was sentenced to stand thrice in the pillory and to pay a fine of 1,000 marks for uttering horribly blasphemous expressions. In this case that upright and conscientious judge, Sir Matthew Hale, observed :—

> Such kind of blasphemous words were not only an offence to God and religion, but a crime against the laws, State and Government, and therefore punishable in that Court. For to say religion is a cheat is to dissolve all those obligations whereby the civil societies are preserved. Christianity is parcel of the laws of England, and, therefore, to reproach the Christian religion is to speak in subversion of the law.

At the beginning of George the Second's reign, Woolston wrote against miracles, and was convicted of four blasphemous discourses against the Saviour. In his defence, he attempted to impugn the miracles, but the Court would not tolerate any discussion on that point, since he wrote generally against Christianity, and did not controvert points of doctrine like a learned theologian might do. In 1793 Williams published part of the *Age of Reason*. The prosecution

against him was conducted by one who always professed himself the most liberal champion of a free Press, Lord Erskine, who insisted that if such impious publications were not checked, they would tend to undermine the religion of the country. That was his (the Attorney-General's) argument in the present case. He did not mean that such publications would undermine the religion of reasonable and thinking men, but only of those who had not the leisure nor inclination to dive into Christian evidences, that part of the community, in fact, to whom religion was of the utmost importance, the Common People.

Williams was convicted. But in the year 1812 another attempt was made to disseminate these horrible doctrines. A person named Eaton was then punished for publishing the very same work. These successive juries and Courts had convicted and punished defendants of offences similar to those imputed to Carlile, and the Attorney-General left it for the jury to judge whether, in this free and enlightened country, where everything was canvassed, where every decision was considered with deliberation, where the most liberal freedom was extended to the Press, where religious tolerance was universal, these successive decisions were not warranted by law.

The prosecution wished to protect the lower and illiterate classes of society from having their faith sapped and their minds diverted from those principles of morality which were so powerfully inculcated by the Christian religion. When such noxious productions were deliberately put into the hands of the ignorant, into the hands of those, who, unlike the rich and powerful, were unable to draw distinctions between ingenious but mischievous arguments and divine truths, like vice, they become familiar to their minds, all respect and veneration for religion and

virtue would diminish, and consequences too painful must ensue. The eyes of all the country were upon the jury, who had to decide whether Christianity was a fabulous imposture.

Publication was then formally proved, and the information containing the indicted passages from the *Age of Reason* read out. Carlile then opened his speech for the defence, which occupied the rest of that day, the whole of the next, and a large portion of the third day. On the first, he insisted on reading and commenting on the whole of Paine's *Age of Reason*, his object being to include it in his report of the trial, and thus circulate widely a repetition of the "blasphemy" he was indicted for. The second day he spent in citing lengthy passages from the Koran and the Bible, and the third in quoting passages from a number of writings in favour of toleration. Amongst others he quoted Archbishop Tillotson, who had said: "If your religion be too good to examine, I doubt it is too bad to be believed."

On the second day of his trial he was continually interrupted by the Attorney-General, the junior counsel for the Crown, the judge, and the foreman and other members of the jury. The Attorney-General's interruptions were a series of objections to Carlile's "promulgation of further blasphemous libels" as a defence to the charge brought against him. He was supported in these appeals to the judge not to suffer such conduct by his junior, Mr. Gurney. The judge interrupted to state, repeatedly, that the defendant was charged with publishing a book in which the Holy Scriptures were reviled, and that it was no defence to reiterate the calumnies for which he had been prosecuted. He was indicted under the Common Law, and the most important part of it, since all our institutions had reference to religion, *i.e.*,

religion generally. The law permitted every man to worship God according to his particular mode of faith, but it did not allow any man to revile religion generally, and to treat the Scriptures as full of lies. Carlile would be allowed to say anything which did not revile the truth of religion. But his lordship would not sit on the Bench and hear the Holy Scriptures calumniated. So well, however, does the wrangle between judge and prisoner illustrate the courage and character of Carlile that it merits a special chapter to itself.

X.—Judge and Prisoner.

The last chapter concluded with a summary of the wrangle between Chief Justice Abbott and Richard Carlile as to the nature and relevancy of his defence. In this chapter we extract a part of the discussion to illustrate the conflict between reason and authority that marked the second and third days of Carlile's trial.

The Chief Justice: The charge against the defendant on this occasion is the publication of a book calumniating and reviling the Holy Scriptures. It is not that, in any book published by him, the doctrines of revealed religion were discussed with that respect, temper, and moderation which ought to be applied to the discussion of every subject, human or divine, public or private. It can be no defence of such a charge that the party against whom it is preferred should reiterate in his address to the jury the same sort of calumny as that which is contained in the book for the publication of which he has been called on to answer,

and I should very ill discharge my duty as a judge or a Christian if I suffered this Court to be made a theatre for uttering calumny against the religion of the country. Anything the defendant can advance to the jury to explain away what is contained in the book, and to show that its tendency is proper, I am most ready to hear. I wish to give to this defendant, as well as to every other person, an opportunity to defend himself fully and fairly, according to the established law of the land. But I am not to suffer the law of the land to be calumniated by such a defence. I cannot permit it.

Carlile: The only object I have in view is to clear the book entitled the *Age of Reason* from the charge made against it, and to justify the observations which it contains on the Old and New Testament. I presume that book cannot be founded on any law of this country. Your Lordship has spoken of the law of the land as applicable to this case. I should like to have that law pointed out.

Chief Justice: I state that the Christian religion is a part of the law of the land—and the most important part—because it is that on which all its institutions are founded, and to which they all refer.....I never will suffer the Holy Scriptures to be examined in this Court for the purpose of calumniating and reviling them.

Carlile: I appeal to your lordship what proof have we that they are *divine?*

Chief Justice: I will not answer such a question as that.....

Carlile: I have been told that the Christian religion is the law of the land. Now that religion is founded on the doctrine of the Trinity, and here is a statute dispensing with a belief in the Trinity, and thereby making Deism a part of the law of the land.

Chief Justice: I say it does not, and I will not hear such a defence.

Carlile: I stand here alone, and I best know what shape my defence ought to take.

Chief Justice: In your own opinion it may be so; but it is for me to look to the legal course of defence. If you cannot proceed without reviling the Christian religion, you cannot defend yourself.

Carlile: The law in question allows me to proceed in this course, for it tolerates Deism.

The Attorney-General: One part of the statute of William and Mary is repealed; but the remainder is in force. It is there treated as a great offence for any persons to deny the Christian religion to be true, or the Scriptures—namely, the Old and New Testament—to be of divine origin.....

Carlile: I have no wish to revile, but merely to examine them.

Chief Justice: Examination does not consist in, and cannot be supported by, bold denials. It is a repetition of the offence.

Carlile: Can we compel our minds to receive as true what we do not believe because there is a law in support of it?

Chief Justice: As long as a man keeps his opinion to himself it is of no consequence to the community, and no human power can take cognizance of it.

Carlile: Your lordship's observations argue nothing but the absurdity of legislating on matters of opinion.

On Carlile proposing to read some extracts from the Bible he was stopped.

Chief Justice: It is unnecessary to read those chapters from Genesis; the jury are acquainted with them.

Carlile: My lord, I read them for the justification of Paine.

Chief Justice: This surely cannot be a defence.

Carlile: My object is to show that Paine was justified in what he asserted; my object is to show that Paine was not guilty of a falsehood.

Chief Justice: I did not restrain you from reading the publication itself, though if what is contained in it were urged by yourself I certainly would not allow you to proceed.

Carlile: My lord, in this country it is easy to excite religious prejudice. Paine said that no man should be condemned for differing with another in opinion. Such conduct is surely not consistent with the spirit of Christianity, nor with any principle of morality or justice.

Chief Justice: I have already stated, and I now repeat it, that, sitting here as an English judge, I cannot allow any man to deny the Holy Bible is of divine authority.

XI.—Carlile's Speech from the Dock.

The subject, said Carlile, was one of deep importance. It was no less a question than whether a man was or was not to be tolerated in indulging whatever creed or opinion he pleased in religious affairs. His endeavour would be to convince the jury that Mr. Paine's *Age of Reason* was not the blasphemous work it was represented to be, and that he was not the wicked and impious individual described in the "Information."

The Attorney-General's speech was a mere repetition of common-place expressions. As to religion, it was merely a parody upon all the Attorney-Generals

who had gone before him. His was the usual cant about the liberty of the Press, the licentiousness of the defendant and the mischievous effects of such a book as the *Age of Reason* being put into the hands of children. But why did not the learned gentleman, who had described this abomination in such glaring colours, caution parents against giving their children the Bible to read in view of the voluptuous and lustful scenes it depicted?

Christianity was said to emanate from the Deity, and not to need the aid of secular power. Then why was he (Carlile) prosecuted? Why did the Attorney-General claim to be defending the cause of God by placing him in the dock when God was an almighty being, capable of defending his own cause? The Attorney-General's singular inconsistency showed he thought differently. Was it not proof that the Christian system was such that nothing but persecution could support it?

They had heard that the present prosecution was founded on the law of the land and that Christianity was part of that law. But he would prove that not Christianity, but Deism, was the law of the land. The first of the Thirty-nine Articles of the Church of England expressly declared that there was one God, all-perfect, all-wise, and all-good, who consisted, nevertheless of three persons, Father, Son, and Holy Ghost. He confessed that it was utterly impossible for him to admit the divinity of Christianity without embracing the doctrine of "the adorable Trinity." But if that was a fundamental doctrine of the Christian faith, all who denied it were enemies to the Christian system. It was impossible to destroy one part without destroying the whole of Christianity.

The Unitarians believed that Christ was born in a natural way, but that he was delegated from God.

In doing so, and particularly in denying the Trinity they as much opposed the Christian system as he, who professed himself a Deist. For all who denied that doctrine were enemies of the Christian system. Yet, most extraordinary as this might appear, an Act of Parliament was passed a few years before by which persons who impugned the doctrine of the Trinity were exempted from all those pains and penalties which they were subjected to formerly. How could this Act be reconciled to the first of the Thirty-nine Articles of the Church, which declared the Trinity to be an essential part of the Christian system. Deism, then, was part of the established law of the land. If a man believed in one God he complied with the provisions of the 53rd of George III (The Toleration Act), which repealed that part of the Act of 9th William and Mary, which respected the impugning of the Trinity. He, the defendant, impugned the Christian religion, but he defended himself on this statute. By protecting from punishment all those who impugned the doctrine of three persons being one God, it deprived that Court of all jurisdiction.

The learned Attorney-General had urged that it would be a waste of the jury's time for him to enter into any defence of blasphemy. But why should it be deemed a waste of time to defend a system of religious opinions said to emanate from God? He had said, further, that the jury had pledged themselves by a solemn oath to support religion. They had done no such thing. Their oath only called on them to decide from what motives he published the *Age of Reason.* Was it a malicious motive? Then he was guilty according to the charge of the Attorney-General. But he acted from a deep conviction that he was aiding the public mind thereby in its search for truth. There was nothing immoral, nothing which could be produc-

tive of the least injury to the public in Paine's work. Indeed, it possessed more moral truth, more just sentiments of reverence for the Deity, than could be collected from all the detached precepts and moral injunctions to be found in the voluminous pages of the Bible.

Crown lawyers were bad judges of the progress of human improvement. Their minds were cramped and confined to the studies connected with their profession. So they paid no regard to the march of human intellect. Consequently, the prosecution had cited as authoritative Sir Matthew Hale's opinion. But that judge was a believer in the now exploded doctrine of witchcraft, for which he caused two women to be burned. To call religion a cheat was said to be an offence in the sight of God. But it was not said what religion was meant. The Jews looked upon the Christian religion as a cheat; the latter on the Mahometan; and all combined in regarding that of the Hindoos as such.

Paine had commented upon the murders, atrocities, and assassination of infants which the Bible said Moses committed by the command of God. He had cited several verses from Numbers in support of his criticism. Had he (Carlile) written and published and imputed to God such blasphemy as this Bible chapter contained, he could not appear before them and ask for a favourable interpretation of his motives. Even the very persons who now prosecuted him would impeach his moral feelings and objects with great severity of invective.

His object was to defend himself from the charge of malicious intention. To do that he must show that he rejected, for its falsehood, the Bible and the Christian religion, and to reject on that account was not to revile. The Unitarians had published a new version,

in which they wholly rejected the chapters relating to the incarnation of Christ, as laid down in the writings of the established religion. If they rejected why should he be debarred the right of rejection? They were legally upheld in their right to reject for its falsehood the supposed divinity of Christ, that was their right to revile that doctrine and to describe as false certain parts of the legalized translation of the Bible and the main teaching of the Christian religion.

His case was comparable to that of Galileo, who was imprisoned for asserting a doctrine afterwards believed by the civilized world. The sole motive which actuated his persecutors was similar to that which had kindled the flames in Smithfield, and kept alight the blazing torch of persecution for the last 1800 years. The same disposition inspired them as agitated the persecutors of the intrepid reformer Luther. If his lordship and Attorney-General could not justify the conduct of the persecutors of Luther their conduct towards him (Carlile) was not justifiable. If no persons had resisted the continuance of error and offered themselves even as victims, falsehood always would have prevailed. The persecutors of Luther and of himself executed their designs in the same manner. The Popish Inquisitors (like the present Court) would listen to no justification, they refused all discussion, they had their law to uphold their religion and not allow its authority to be impugned. Had their ancestors not resisted superstition, the jury would not now be sitting in that box, and he would have been delivered up to the Inquisition for his opinions.

If Christianity was, indeed, part of the law of the land, he regretted that it had so little influence upon the tempers of those around him. The New Testament itself deprecated the doctrines of persecution in almost every page, and Jesus himself had been called

the disturber of the people, and was persecuted in his time for blasphemy, and finally suffered as the founder of Christianity acting in defiance of the established religion of the country. A judge was then found base enough to condemn him at the instigation of the priests and elders of the Jewish nation.

XII.—Verdict and Sentence.

Carlile's speech concluded on Thursday, October 14. The defendant then addressed the judge. He intended to have brought before the jury the leading characters of the thirty or forty different sects, whom he had subpœnaed for the purpose of showing that some of them approached very near himself in their profession of faith, that they were all tolerated, and that consequently he himself ought to be tolerated. He intended to take their opinions on certain parts of the Old Testaments and put it to everyone whether they conceived that Christianity required the aid of the secular arm to support it.

The Chief Justice could not allow any such evidence. The jury knew very well that there were many denominations of Christians, and it would be most irrelevant and improper to call on them to explain the particulars of their faith. He could not allow a Unitarian to explain that he did not believe in the immaculate conception.

The Attorney-General rose to reply. The powers of the repealing statute that exempted Unitarians from certain disabilities cautiously left untouched all provisions against general attacks on the Christian reli-

gion. It was the intention of the legislature to give the fullest toleration to the followers of Christ, but at the same time no one was empowered to scoff at and revile religion, to say that the Bible was a fable and Christianity an imposture. He must insist on the dreadful consequences of letting in a torrent of blasphemy and revilings upon society, not because it would injure Christianity, but because it might injure the minds of individuals.

The Chief Justice summed up the arguments on both sides, and pronounced the law to be against the defendant. A man might, agreeably to the laws of England, doubt or disbelieve the divinity of the Christian religion. It was open to him to communicate these doubts or disbeliefs to others, always providing he did it privately, silently, and respectfully. The jury could see, therefore, that it was not a matter of the respective merits of two books that advocated different opinions. The truth or falsity of the ideas Carlile proclaimed did not matter. By publishing opinions publicly questioning the veracity of the Bible and Christianity, the defendant aimed at creating a breach of the peace. It was this quality that constituted the criminal matter or libel, which was an offence punishable under the rules and according to the usage of the common law of England. Carlile had pursued an improper defence and the jury had interrupted it rightly.

The jury, at half-past four o'clock, retired. A little after five they returned with a verdict of "Guilty."

Carlile left the Court when the jury retired. He was taken into custody in the evening.

. . . . . .

On Friday, October 15, Carlile came into Court attended by two officers. The cause was called on. It

was an indictment instigated by the Vice Society for the republication of *The Principles of Nature; or a Development of the Moral Causes of Happiness and Misery.*

Mr. Gurney was counsel for the prosecution. He went over the same grounds with regard to the law as the Attorney-General had done the two days before, and quoted several passages from the work in question, in which Mr. Palmer reasons against the credibility of the Christian religion from the barbarity of the times in which it was first professed, and the violences to which it has given rise.

Carlile repeated his former arguments respecting the law and the perfect morality of opinions against the Bible. In allusion to the charge in the indictment of his being a malicious and evil-disposed person, he said: "Unless it can be proved that I published this work with the view of demoralizing the public mind, you cannot charge me with a malicious intention."

The defendant then commenced reading Mr. Palmer's book, but as he was proceeding, the foreman of the jury rose and said: "My Lord, the jury are all of opinion that Mr. Carlile is pursuing a very improper line of defence."

After some further conversation between Carlile and the judge, the former said: "I have done then." He then sat down.

The Chief Justice summed up against the defendant, and the jury without retiring, pronounced a verdict of "Guilty."

Two similar prosecutions against the defendant were withdrawn.

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Carlile was brought before the same Court on Friday, November 12, of the same year, for the pur-

pose of affording him the opportunity of moving for a new trial. The grounds on which he demanded it were—first, that of the twenty-four gentlemen who formed the reduced jury one had been dead twelve months. Secondly, that another of those jurors had not been summoned. A third ground on which he rested still more strongly was, that on his second trial he had been prevented, by the interposition of the Chief Justice, from making that defence which was necessary. He had been charged with wickedly and maliciously publishing a blasphemous libel; but had he been permitted to make his defence, he would have proved that his intentions were not malicious, and that the book he had published had a good moral tendency. In all his appeals to the jury on this point he had been interrupted.

Chief Justice: I certainly would not permit any attempt to prove that the Holy Scriptures were not the revealed will of God, although I allowed you to read the whole book containing the libel, in your defence. This, to me, was painful, and not less so to the jury, who were Christians, and I could not permit a line of defence which was intended to establish the blasphemous doctrine that "He that believeth in Christ, is an infidel to God!"

Carlile: My Lord, I wanted to prove that there were numerous translations of the Bible, which differed very materially from each other. And I wished to know which was the Parliamentary Bible, or the Bible protected by the Statute Law; for, as the translation is incorrect, if any one can be the revealed will of God it must be the Hebrew version only.

Justice Best: We cannot allow the defendant to go on in this manner.

Justice Bayley: Christianity is the law of the land, and the Bible the foundation of Christianity. You not

only deny parts of the Bible, but the whole of it, in the libel you published.

Carlile: The *Age of Reason* speaks favourably of parts of the Bible.

After some further conversation, Carlile proceeded to state that he had subpœnaed the Archbishop of Canterbury, the Jewish High Priest, and the most learned of all the different Sectaries, to prove that Christianity could not be defined, and, therefore, could not be proved to be the law of the land; that another ground of his application was that the jury retired to consider their verdict, and sent for two statutes, which the Chief Justice hesitated to send, and called the jury back, charging them again to the prejudice of the defendant, and giving a wrong exposition of the law.

The Judges severally stated that there were no grounds for a new trial. The indictment, they observed, was founded on common law, and that the Act of the 53rd of the King, which repealed the statute of William (9th and 10th) expressly required that the person taking the benefit of it should be a Christian.

Carlile was ordered to be brought up for judgment on the following Tuesday.

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On Tuesday, November 15, the Attorney-General having prayed the judgment of the Court on Carlile, the Chief Justice read his notes of the trial, omitting all the matter which he thought offensive. Mr. Denman, to the apparent surprise of the Court, said he had a motion to make in arrest of judgment. The common law had been improperly resorted to in the case of the defendant since his offence was provided against by the Statute 9 and 10 of William III, which fixed certain pains and penalties for the offence. The

Court could not travel out of this Statute without virtually repealing it.

The Chief Justice expressed his opinion that the statute referred to did not operate as an extinction of the common law.

The other Judges concurred in these opinions, and decided against the motion. The Chief Justice then read his notes of the trial for publishing *Palmer's Principles of Nature,* after which

The defendant rose and said that he had to state reason why *no* punishment should be inflicted on him. He should make no remarks on the books which were the subject of the prosecution—a prosecution which would hereafter be considered unwarrantable, but which had, nevertheless, done good by exciting a spirit of enquiry and free discussion. Whenever Courts of Justice had taken cognizance of matters of opinion, they had gone wrong, and their proceedings had afterwards been condemned. The celebrated Galileo, for maintaining the true doctrine respecting the motion of the earth round the sun, had been punished as maintaining what was contrary to the Christian religion. Yet afterwards the descendants of his prosecutors willingly embraced that doctrine which their ancestors had condemned. What was considered heresy in one age was orthodoxy in another. In this country, the national faith at one time consisted of the mythology of the Romans; at another, of the Pagan worship of the Saxons; and, subsequently, of the superstitions of the Roman Catholics. At each of those periods the form of worship was said to be part of the law of the land, and that mode of worship which was now described as such was different from all.

There were a great many distinctions in law between the various degrees of guilt of those who committed murder, manslaughter, justifiable homicide, etc., and

the only means of judging the particular nature of the offence was the *intention* of the offender. If, then, the Court would allow that he believed the books of Paine and Palmer to contain truths, they must declare him not only innocent, but praiseworthy in publishing them. To punish him was to condone the beheading of Russell, the burning of the martyrs, the poisoning of Socrates, and the crucifixion of him whom they called their Lord and Master. If Christianity were true, the prosecution was a libel on its truth. Nothing was more opposed to the principles of its founder than its propagation and defence by force, dungeons, and fires. In conclusion, Carlile declared that his object had been to promote the interests of morality. With this consciousness he claimed, at the hands of the Court, his immediate liberation from that unjust confinement which he had already suffered.

The Attorney-General and Mr. Gurney briefly insisted on the enormity of the defendant's offence, after which

Justice Bailey passed sentence. "The crime of blasphemy was one of the most serious offences known to our law. That law allowed a free toleration to all. It imposed a religious creed upon no man, but left him to worship his Creator in that way which most accorded with the dictates of his own conscience. The Courts of Justice could not interfere with any doctrines which he confined to his own breast, or the truth of which he discussed with calmness and reason ; but he could not be permitted rashly to unsettle the faith of others. The defendant had published a book grossly traducing a moral and religious code, on which depended the force and sanction of oaths, and, consequently, the security of life and property, the obedience of the subject, and the honesty of judges. With regard to the intention, it was, doubtless, their duty to inquire

into it ; but God only was acquainted with the inward man ; and the power of human tribunals could go no further to ascertain it than by judging of his actions, and the effects produced by them. The sentence of the Court upon you, Richard Carlile, is that, for the publication of Paine's *Age of Reason,* you pay a fine to the King of £1,000 and be imprisoned for two years in the county gaol of Dorset, in the town of Dorchester ; and that for the second offence, the publication of Palmer's *Principles of Nature,* you pay a further fine to the King of £500, and be further imprisoned for one year in the said gaol at Dorchester. And that you be further imprisoned until those fines are paid, and also until you give security, yourself in the sum of £1,000 and two others in the sum of £100 each, that you be of the peace and good behaviour for the term of your natural life."

Carlile bowed, and was then conducted out of Court. He was handcuffed immediately and hurried away to Dorchester Gaol.

With no less speed a writ of *levari facias* was issued to take possession of such of the defendant's property as could be found upon his premises in Fleet Street. Within an hour of sentence being pronounced £600 worth of books, besides loose cash, was seized, and next morning the "Temple of Deism" was completely closed. Crowds, however, collected round the door. Someone had placarded a printed paper bearing a defiant inscription. In tearing it down, the beadles were interrupted, hooted, and hustled by the people.

The Crown remained in possession, keeping the shop closed, from November 16 to December 24, 1819. Rent became due, and it was then emptied.

XIII.—Christian Judges.

It will not be out of place at this stage to consider the temper of Carlile's persecutors. This is indicated most remarkably in the case of Carlile's shopman, named Davidson, who was indicted, together with Jane Carlile, for publishing the ninth number of the *Republican,* the first number of the *Deists' Magazine,* and Richard Carlile's *Life of Thomas Paine.* This cause was heard at the Court of King's Bench on Monday, October 23, 1820.

Mr. Gurney opened the case by stating that it was a prosecution of the "pernicious doctrines" promoted by Richard Carlile and insisting on the "absolute necessity of prosecutions to protect the best interests of society." The indicted publications declared the existence of an equitable code of laws to be incompatible with the existence of the Christian religion, and pretended to refute alleged falsehoods, absurdities, and impossibilities set forth in the Bible.

Davidson said that although no two of the jury could agree upon the system which they proposed to support, they would all agree upon the propriety of finding him guilty. All sects had been persecuted in the first instance and afterwards tolerated. The same would happen to Deists and Atheists. Let the jury remember that at one period they would have been tortured for professing that very Protestant faith which they were now called upon to defend by imprisoning him. They should reflect that his prosecution had been instituted by that remorseless inquisitional feeling which had lighted the murderous flames in the days of Queen Mary and filled the dungeons in the reign of Elizabeth.

It had been said that the man who pleaded his own cause was a fool. But it was better to take that

course than hire a barrister to make a sham defence, and no counsel could be prevailed upon to set up that which was the honest defence.

Mr. Justice Best would not suffer so scandalous a charge to be brought against the gentlemen of the bar.

The Defendant: My Lord, you must not interfere with my defence.

Mr. Justice Best: Mr. Davidson, I should be extremely sorry to abuse the power with which this seat invests me. If you think that my power extends only to removing you from the Court, you are mistaken; I have the power of fining you whenever you transgress the bounds of decency, and I will do so if you presume again to offer any insult to me or the profession.

The Defendant: If your dungeon is ready, my Lord, suffer me to give you the key.

Mr. Justice Best: I fine you £20 for that expression.

The Defendant continued: The Deists were entitled to issue a magazine of their own, and they were entitled to treat the Bible as a work destructive to the honour of God and to the best interests of society, if that was their belief.

Mr. Justice Best: I cannot endure this. I will not sit in this place and hear the religion under which I am sworn to administer justice scoffed at and insulted. I fine you £40 more, sir, for that offence.

The defendant maintained the *Deists' Magazine* was a work dedicated to polemical discussion. Its columns were open equally to either side of the argument. Deists were no worse citizens than Christians. Did not murderers die in Christian principles? Did not thieves often declare themselves Christian because they were afraid to urge their right to think for themselves? Were there no infidels and sceptics among the bishops?

Mr. Justice Best: The defendant is asserting that

which he knows to be false, and I am determined not to hear these calumnies. Justice, shall not in her own sanctuary, be insulted and defied. I add £40 more to the £60 which I have already fined you; and remember, whatever becomes of this cause, those fines must be paid.

The defendant resumed. He was not worth £10 in the world; that he should pay the fines was impossible; but he must go on with his defence. He would not offend the learned judge if he could help it.

Mr. Justice Best: Do not suppose it offends me. It is too contemptible.

The defendant concluded his remarks to the jury with extracts from the works of Heine, Gibbon, Shaftesbury, Burgess, and Bolingbroke.

Mr. Justice Best addressed the jury. It was necessary that a judge should keep his temper, but there must be a limit to forbearance. He had thought it his duty to inflict four severe fines upon the defendant. The object of those fines was answered and they were now remitted. Enough had been done to show the power of the Court.

Every man had a right to state that such and such a tenet, whether held by a particular sect or the Established Church, was an erroneous opinion, and to support his assertion with argument. But he must not treat received or tolerated opinions with contempt. Persons were at liberty to put their own construction upon texts of Scripture, but they must not dispute the truths of Scripture. Men could trust to the truth of a religion which had endured eighteen centuries and been trusted and professed by Newton, Locke, Boyle, and Johnson. Christianity was the foundation of every national institution. Even Hume, Gibbon, Bolingbroke, and other writers of that kind admitted the moral excellence of Christianity.

The man who libelled religion found a satanic pleasure in reducing others to the same lost, ruined, desperate condition in which he himself was so unhappy as to stand.

The jury must decide whether the indicted works were specimens of fair argument or fraught with scurrility, abuse, and vituperation against the established religion of the country.

The prosecution then asked for the defendant's committal, and the latter asked for bail pending sentence.

Mr. Justice Best: I shall require you to enter into your own recognizance in the sum of £500, and to find two sufficient securities in the sum of £100 each. I further inform you that I shall require this bail for your good behaviour as well as for your appearance, and if you sell any libellous work, your recognizances will be estreated. I do this in mercy to yourself.

The defendant declined bail upon such terms, and went to prison.

On Wednesday, November 15, of the same year, Mr. Cowper moved for a rule in the Court of the King's Bench to show cause why this verdict should not be set aside and a new trial granted. He held an affidavit from the defendant which stated that he was interrupted in his defence in three instances by Mr. Justice Best, who fined him to the amount of £100, and so menaced his proceeding with important arguments relevant to his case.

Mr. Justice Best objected to the reception of the affidavit on the plea that the defendant being a Deist, no reliance could be placed on the truth of it.

This objection was over-ruled by the other judges.

The Court maintained that there was a power vested in judges to impose fines when there remained no other measure to restrain a defendant from converting his

defence into an attack on the law and institutions of the country. They granted a rule in order to consider if the exercise of that power had hindered a legitimate defence. This rule was discharged ten days later by the same court.

Mr. Gurney, for the Crown, opposed the rule being made absolute, and asserted that the imposition of the fines had not prevented a legitimate defence. The bold and undaunted manner in which the defendant added one offence to the other was at once sufficient to show that no great load of intimidation weighed on his mind. The defendant in the most unembarrassed manner had continued to pursue for three quarters of an hour the same line of argument without the least symptom of intimidation ; he even on the judge's interrupting him from holding forth what he considered indecorous matter, turned round to the jury and said, "he was not to be interrupted in his defence ; that the judge was only placed there to tell them the law of the case and to record their verdict." What would be the effect of granting a new trial? What assurance had their lordships that the same line of defence would not be pursued? Unless their lordships were prepared to say they were bound to sit on the Bench to hear themselves grossly libelled and the established religion called in question, they would, he thought discharge the rule.

Mr. Cowper, for the defendant, contended that it was most dangerous that such a power as that claimed by Mr. Justice Best should be vested in any set of men. The defendant should stand erect and undaunted before the Court, and the judge, instead of intimidating, should give him every encouragement. Coke had laid it down that a prosecutor was not to be intimidated or deterred from instituting a proceeding. If it was right to shield a prosecutor, how much more necessary

was it to the ends of justice that a defendant should not be intimidated while making his defence. At the trial of Sir Walter Raleigh for high treason, the charge was supported by one witness where the law required two. Raleigh exclaimed: "I am being tried by the Inquisition, and not by the law!" The Attorney-General insisted that this was a treasonable speech, but no fines were imposed.

Mr. Justice Bailey attacked this speech for the defence and upheld the fining. The Chief Justice held that the judge who did not fine a defendant who persisted in a defence of irreligion and blasphemy was guilty of a dereliction of duty. Christianity was part of the established law of the land, and according to their oaths the judges were bound to maintain it. Prisoners could not offend with impunity. The other judges concurred.

Three days later, Mr. Justice Bailey pronounced judgment on Davidson. He dwelt upon the truths and merits of the Christian religion, and sent Davidson to Oakland Gaol for two years. He ordered him to find sureties, himself in £200, and two others in £200 each, for his good behaviour during a term of five years.

Which illustrates excellently the temper of Carlile's persecutors and their utter absence of humour. That persons who could dilate on the sufferings of the early Christians and study the records of the various martyrs should be incapable of seeing themselves as others were bound to see them in the light of history, passes all sane understanding. Were they stupid or only callous? Or did sentimentalism and piety render them both callous and stupid? There are times, when dwelling on the worth of Carlile's struggle and that of his shopmen, one would like to understand.

XIV.—Pious Polemics.

In the last chapter we considered the spirit of Mr. Justice Best and Mr. Justice Bailey in dealing with Carlile's shopmen. These two judges were noted for their biblical championships and Christian activities when off the Bench. I have no doubt that posterity, when it chooses to remember them, will note also their judicial character when presiding over the trials Carlile's ceaseless courage and opposition to authority caused the Government to undertake without glory to itself or benefit to mankind. I wish to throw a little more light on the spirit to which Best and Bailey appealed as their public opinion for applause and sustenance of their pious conscience.

The *Times* spoke in Carlile's time as it does to-day for respectable society. Many were the editorials it published against Richard Carlile and the Free Press. Typical of them all was the one that appeared in its columns for October 16, 1819, commenting on the "mock trials," as Carlile so well termed his Court appearances. I cite the following extract from this militant Christian apology:—

> God knows what has made infidels of Paine or Carlile, but we know that they have no right to heap indiscriminate abuse upon the documents of the Christian faith. If, indeed, humane men could have felt any regret at the prosecution of Carlile.....that feeling of compassion would have been wholly extinguished by the system of defence which he set up—a defence which aggravated his previous misconduct, and must have made even infidels ashamed of such a partner in their disbelief. The Court and jury were alike disgusted at seeing him persevere

> with stupid obstinacy in a course which he was told again and again was contrary to law, and that, without any turn of address or dexterity of manner, which obtains its object while it seems to decline its pursuit.....though there are at all times infidels in the moral world, as there are monsters in the natural world, *yet the two are equally rare;* and a Paine or Carlile are as seldom seen as a dwarf of thirty inches high, or a bull with two heads.....Carlile, also, it must be remembered, sinned with his eyes open, he was told by an antecedent verdict he ought not to publish the *Age of Reason.*

Paine was a monster only because he had exposed the Church and denounced the vice and ignorance of power. Carlile was a monster because he saw the call for a genius who should write exclusively for the poor and challenge the oppression that weighed them down to the earth.

Naturally, the Czar of Russia was shocked at the depravity which could pursue so uncompromisingly such a career of public usefulness. He became apprehensive of "the people's morals," and, acting on the counsel of his advisers, gave directions to the Russian police to prevent the introduction of all the English newspapers containing reports of Carlile's trial. The Czar probably appreciated the retrograde social tendencies of religion. In its name, the Russian peasants were bidden to obey humbly the dictates of the Czar and his Grand Dukes, lest they were visited with the vengeance of Almighty God. These threats might have become but empty sounds had the details of Carlile's trial been brought to the ears of the vile masses.

Carlile, in prison, with no greater fortune than his indomitable courage and earnest affection, haunted his enemies. Within two months of his imprisonment

two Press Acts were passed mainly for his benefit. One of these laid down the definition of sedition which has been accepted as legal ever since and is repeated, parrot-like, in every modern prosecution for sedition. This definition was recognized to be contradictory and absurd by the very men who rushed it into law. But they were striving to suppress a man who believed in the usefulness of knowledge. So they made their absurdity law and law it has since remained. The temper of its definers and their fearful respect for Carlile is evidenced by the tone of the speeches summarized below :—

1819.—House of Lords.

Earl Bathurst wanted a man to be liable to sentences of transportation, outlawry, and banishment for sedition. That fines and imprisonment were not sufficient to deter men from a repetition of such offences was proven by the fact of Carlile, after he had been charged, repeating his offence up to the very time a verdict had been secured against him (Dec. 9).

The Earl of Carnarvon stated that it appeared from the informations on the table that there had been no prosecutions of libels in 1818, *and only Carlile's* in 1819 (Dec. 10).

The Duke of Wellington shared Earl Bathurst's views. The existing laws were not strong enough to cope with a man like Carlile, who had continued the sale of his libel after conviction, and had published it also in another form before sentence was passed upon him.

Lord Holland thought that the noble Duke should have gone one step further and have shown that the Court was unable to punish such an offender. Nothing else remained for their lordships except to apply the death penalty.

HOUSE OF COMMONS.

The Solicitor-General declared that the House had to judge of the character of the Peterloo Meeting by its leaders. There was Carlile, who in his *Republican* was continually saying things as strong as that "we had a mock king and a mock parliament, it was time to take up arms and play the man" (Nov. 24).

The Attorney-General wished to suppress indoor discussions such as those that had been proposed to be debated at Hopkin's Chapel, Soho, viz. :—

(1) Which of the three professions has the greatest tendency to harden the human heart—the hangman, the grave-digger, or the parson?

(2) Whether Lord Chief Justice Abbott's refusal to allow Mr. Carlile to read the Bible in the course of his defence arose out of a real respect for the sacred writings, or from the fear that their supposed absurdity and folly might be exposed thereby? (Dec. 8).

And so the despotic measures were passed into law. Everyone quailed before them except Richard Carlile and his brave shopmen and shopwomen. Their opposition rendered these tyrannous Acts a dead letter.

Writing of these despotic measures and the power to banish thus secured to the Crown, Carlile said: "In some cases, this power of banishment might amount to deprivation of life; but for my own part, I think nothing of it, and hope to show that it will not have the least tendency to change my course."

This calm resolution, as Holyoake observes, "was the tone of his entire career."

XV.—Principles and Politics.

How contemptible was the opposition of the practical politicians to the Despotic Measures will be seen from the conduct of Henry Hunt.

Samuel Bamford was by no means a Freethinker and possessed no bias in favour of Carlile's opinions. His account in *Passages in the Life of a Radical* of the relations between Cobbett, Carlile, and Hunt make interesting reading therefore. Bamford describes his entry into the Reform movement of his day, the riots of 1816, the influence and authority of William Cobbett's writings, and the establishment under his influence of Hampden Clubs. Bamford also showed his admiration for Henry Hunt, lamenting only the latter's love of theatrical display and applause and injustice to his colleagues. Present with Hunt at the famous Peterloo massacre, at which Richard Carlile was present also, Bamford was charged with Hunt at the Yorks Assizes for seditious conspiracy before Mr. Justice Bailey and a special jury in March, 1820. Bamford throws great light on Hunt's contemptible behaviour in connection with that trial, and his willingness to secure his own glory and reputation at the expense of his colleagues. Bamford then proceeds to describe Hunt's speech for the defence and his reference to Richard Carlile :—

"Hunt had thus obtained what he so ardently desired, a night for consultation, reflection, and repose, and a crowded morning audience for his grand exhibition. I shall not dwell upon his defence, except to notice one passage relative to Richard Carlile. In the commencement of his address he said, 'I am not only charged in the opening speech of the learned counsel with having attempted to overthrow the constituted

authorities of my country, but also to extinguish in the flame of infidelity the altar of our holy religion. It has been industriously promulgated that I was connected with Mr. Carlile; it has been promulgated that I am a man of his principles. Where is the proof? Without it why should the imputation have been cast? I shall not advert to the conduct of that man, because the law has imposed its punishment upon him, and he is now enduring the reward of his temerity. It would, therefore, be improper and imprudent and unjust for me in open court to touch upon such a subject, but why was the topic introduced? I will tell you, gentlemen—to connect our cause with that of irreligion, and to identify the cause of the reformers with that of Mr. Carlile. I profess to be a reformer, but not a leveller; I profess to be a lover of liberty, but not of licentiousness; sweet, lovely liberty, gentleman, is pure and amiable as sacred truth; licentiousness is as disgraceful as darkness and falsehood.'

"And then in a subsequent passage, he said, 'You have heard the miserable attempt to fix upon me an irreligious connection with Carlile. I have known the man, and if I do not say what I think of him, it is because he is now suffering the sentence of the law, and therefore is not a fit subject for anybody's animadversion. Of him I shall say nothing now, but I shall say that none of the principles, professions, nor doctrines he is said to have espoused were ever, at any moment of my life, imbibed by or believed in by me. In the face of God and my country I most solemnly declare that I never read one line of the theological works of Carlile until Dr. Stoddart's libel upon me first put them into my hands in the following manner: Mr. Scarlett was then employed, as he is now, against me in the Court of King's Bench. Carlile's trial was going on, mine was the very next, and I was bound

to watch it, or else expose myself to the consequences of being absent when called on—a verdict for the defendant. Such was my unfortunate case, or else I should not have been in London, much less in Court, when Carlile's trial was pending. I here further declare, in the face of heaven, that among the reformers, rich or poor, I never recollect to have seen one line of the theological works of Thomas Paine. Why, then, identify the reformers with such doctrines? Good God! was it not enough to charge us with crimes against our fellow-men, but that also we must be designated as infidels against our religion and our God.'

"Whilst Hunt uttered those last sentences the tears trickled down his face. 'Good God!' I also mentally exclaimed, 'Is it possible? Are not my ears deceiving me?'

"Carlile was one of those who went with Hunt in the carriage from Johnson's to the meeting on the morning of the 16th. He was so fortunate as to escape from the field, and had since been tried, found guilty, and sentenced to imprisonment for a theological work, and was at the moment Hunt thus denounced and renounced him in prison. No human power, nor dread of human power should have been able to compel Hunt to make use of such language at that time, and under those circumstances. Whatever Carlile was, good or bad, religious or the contrary, the law had for the present done its work with him, and that is seldom part done; and above all other moments, that was not the one to aim a clumsy and treacherous blow at a late comrade, now bound and fettered. 'Can this,' thought I, 'be also one of the fashionable levities of great folk? If it be, it is requisite that I should be more guarded and more self-governed in future.' And so I was; I continued to respect

Hunt for his good points, but I was no longer entirely blinded to his faults. I never could forget this scene."

And so Henry Hunt, the great political reformer, by his conduct assisted the Society for the suppression of Vice in its war on thought and freedom and the man who stood for both. In the same year as Hunt made this hypocritical denunciation the Vice Society proclaimed unending war on "that most audacious offender, Carlile," and the *Age* spoke of "the miscreant tinker." Yet Carlile's thought and struggle were more useful as well as more heroic than Hunt's politics. To-day we behold him as the genius of his age.

XVI.—Mental Evolution.

Persecuted by tyranny and abandoned by cowardice, Carlile employed his prison hours in clearing his vision and strengthening his outlook. In his speech from the dock in 1819, he abandoned the idea of God, only to cling to the title of Deist. This temper continued down to 1821, when he proclaimed himself an Atheist. Four years later, we have him denouncing Deism as misleading and implying cowardice. "Man," he says, "has no intelligent superior, no immortal soul. The mortal soul of man is the only intelligent lord of matter." "I advocate the abolition of all religions, without setting up anything new of the kind," he says in 1821. He is already a confirmed Materialist and defines mind as an attribute of the organization of matter. Two years later he emphasizes his repudiation of the Deity: "I may have said that the changes observed in phenomenon argue the existence of an active power in the universe, but I have

again and again renounced the notion of that power being intelligent or designing." "It is not till since my imprisonment," he says again, "that I have avowed myself Atheist." It is 1824, on the title-page to his tenth volume of the *Republican,* that he declares: "There is no such God in existence as any man has preached; nor any kind of God." He now determined to exclude from the *Republican* as useless words, *God, Nature, Mind, Soul,* and *Spirit.*

During the same period he progressed politically. In 1819 he takes his stand on the written law, and scorns the Common Law. In 1825 he proclaims as his motto in the *Republican,* "Free Discussion Against All Law." It is very interesting to follow his mental evolution on this point. In 1819 he was advised by a supporter that the Ancient Common Law knew nothing of such an offence as libel, and being no more ancient than Christianity, could not possibly have provided for its maintenance and legal establishment. Carlile points out that, had he argued thus, he would have been met with the statement that the Ancient Common Law did provide for breaches of the peace, and that was what he was charged with. Very clear and concise is his statement of the case against the Ancient Common Law in the following passage:—

"The origin of Parliaments in this country, consisting of King, Lords, and Commons, was no more the effect of common law than statute law; it was only the effect of an opinion of its necessity formed in the bosom of a man who had the power to enforce it; and experiences teaches that there is no other means of obtaining beneficial changes in the political state of our country. As to penalties for misdemeanours, what has it to do with common law, or any other laws: it is a point of equity, resident in the bosom of the judge or a magistrate, and is as often guided by caprice and

prudence as by the dictates of justice, particularly in the present day, when almost every judge and magistrate are partizans. Neither have judicial forms anything to do with the Common Law, as they change with the convenience of the court; and, as far as juries are concerned, they are packed on every occasion, where the Government and its party have any interest. With respect to the fundamental principles of the Constitution being supported by the Common Law, what is called the Constitution of England is a mere farce and byeword; the fundamental principles of which are confined to the bosom or the breach of Lord Castlereagh. All lawyers will admit, that the definition of what is, and what is not Common Law, is altogether confined to the bosoms of the judges, and each defines it, agreeable to his own disposition, view, and purpose. If we argue that a traditionary law existed in this country, before the use of letters, it appears that it should follow, as a matter of course, that the introduction of the use of letters, and consequently of statute and written law, should altogether supersede the necessity of an unwritten or Common Law, which is continually liable to be perverted and abused by corrupt judges, of whom we are never deficient.....The Common Law in this country is merely retained as a trap for the unwary, when the Statute Law cannot be strained to answer the necessary political purposes of a corrupt system of Government."

"Justice," he declares a year later, "is nowhere found in the country. Her painted figure only is visible in our courts of law and iniquity. We have the shadow to torment our eyes and senses, whilst the substance is sought in vain.....The law cannot reach ermined rogues, surpliced hypocrites, and flagitious ministers, nor their bribed supporters." From this he concluded that "the true definition of law.....is the

caprice of the ruling power." "Law, like religion," he says again, "is a mere word. They are words of sound without any confined application; they vary with the circumstances. Hypocrites and tyrants say that both are necessary to bridle the multitude, therefore they may be considered as the forerunners of slavery: the one imposes an unequal and unjust restraint on the body, the other on the mind." He leads up to this conclusion by pointing out that "the law is omnipotent and also omnivorous; each party in power destroys its opponents according to law."

Carlile cites a considerable amount of historical evidence in support of this assertion, and concludes: "The law brought Charles Stuart to the block; and again, the law brought those to the gallows who brought this monarch to the block. The law provided a sumptuous funeral for Oliver Cromwell, and the law again enabled Charles Stuart the Second to dig up his putrid body and hang it on the gallows. But then it must be observed that the law which brought one party to the gallows, was the subversion of that law by which the other party were put to death."

In 1825 he returns to this subject and maintains that the Constitution is a changling and class imposition. He considers the Common Law and the Statute Law alike to be opposed to the true interests of freedom and the common people. This can be understood in view of his experience which convinced him of the truth of Paine's dictum: "The trade of governing has been monopolized by the most ignorant and most rascally individuals of mankind."

Carlile was educated also by his activity as an editor. "I give," said he in 1828 in his *Lion,* "a receipt to the criticism of my friends upon my writings for the better part of the knowledge that I now possess." Francis Place was one of his correspondents and intro-

duced him to a knowledge of Jeremy Bentham, who taught him that to destroy error was to build truth. Bentham would complete Carlile's contempt for law, for he wrote with much wisdom that would excite naturally Carlile's sympathy: "As if from a rubbish cart a continually increasing and ever shapeless mass of Law is from time to time shot down upon the heads of the people; and out of this rubbish, and at his peril, is each man left to pick out what belongs to him. Thus in pouring forth Law, does the Government, as it is written, rain down snares."

In 1820 Carlile was favourable to Henry Hunt and other reformers. By 1825 he has seen through them. He realizes that the poor are the people to write for and that their enlightenment must settle the social question.

"I write for the poor," said Carlile in the *Republican* for June 17, 1825, "though all of that class do not see it. I write for the poor or the rich oppressor would not persecute me."

Yes! he wrote for the poor. He struggled for the poor, and his magnificent example inspired others to do the same.

XVII.—Karl Sandt.

In March, 1819, the German student, Karl Sandt, killed the Russian police spy, German liberticide, and hired agent of the despots of Europe, Kotzebue. Sandt was executed over twelve months later. The latter event led Carlile to applaud the motive and deed in the columns of the *Republican* for June 9, 1820. He also praised the firm manner in which Sandt had played the martyr. "Tyrants," he lamented, "are

the last men to take lessons from example and history. Their ambition impels them to go on. They are actuated by feelings similar to the common robber, who has often felt himself enriched by his booty and doubts not but that he shall be equally successful in the next attempt. He thus goes on from time to time until the hand of justice and oppressed innocence arrests his course, and he is only convinced of former misdeeds by the near and certain approach of death."

On the same date as these sentiments were published in the *Republican,* Carlile was applauding the justice of political assassination in a letter he addressed to the Rev. W. Wait, B.A., of Bristol. This divine had written to Carlile deploring the tendency of his publications, and affirming that they were calculated to lead to violent conspiracies against the State, acts of assassination, and to the consequent destruction of the souls and bodies of many of Carlile's fellow-countrymen. Carlile grasped the class-basis of this gentleman's hypocritical objection to murder, and immediately came to grips with him by propounding the following question: "What think you, sir, of those people who were slain at Manchester, innocent and unoffending? Those murders have been trifled with in our courts of law."

Carlile now proceeded to tell Mr. Wait more than he seemed to ask, so that it could not be said that he was evading the question, viz.:—

"I hold the destruction of tyrants by putting them to death suddenly and violently, or—if you should think me not sufficiently explicit—by assassinating them, to be an act just, moral, virtuous, and legal, agreeable to the law of Nature which should be the foundation of all other law. A tyrant is the common destroyer of his species, and any member of that community in which he dwells and plays the tyrant.....

may, in my opinion, meritoriously put him to death. The moralist, or a man with the most humane mind, will stand aloof, and ask himself the following questions: Which would have been the greatest outrage on the laws, morals, and welfare of this society? That this man, who is an avowed and admitted tyrant, should fall by the hand of one whom he has injured, or that he should have lived to have made unhappy, miserable, and in continual fear for their lives and properties, every member of this society that should not feel disposed to flatter and applaud his wicked measures?"

Carlile demanded a frank and candid answer to this last query of his clerical questioner. But this request was never complied with. Courage is no part of the clerical habit. But it was of Carlile's, for he proceeded to add:—

"But as I consider that the majority of the present ministers are tyrants and enemies to the interest and welfare of the people of this country, so also I am bold to confess that if any man who has suffered unjustly under their administration should be so far indifferent about his own life as to slay any one or more of them, I would tune my lyre to sing his praises. I consider it to be a want of virtue and true courage that makes a man seek companions to perform such an act. It is a proof that he calls upon others to do what he has not resolution enough to do single-handed; and in seeking men that will co-operate with him, he is sure to fall in with the most vicious of mankind, and mar all the good he might have done as an individual. I condemn an association for such purposes."

XVIII.—Thomas Paine.

Although Carlile published Thomas Paine's *Age of Reason* in vindication of the freedom of the Press, he was actively opposed to Paine's theological opinions. So much is clear from a letter that he wrote from Dorchester gaol, dated June 9, 1820, to the Rev. W. Wait, B.A., of King's Square, Bristol. In this letter Carlile declared :—

"Although I applaud the manner in which Paine has rescued the name and character of the Deity from the grovelling notions which the Jew and Christian hold of him, still, when I come to his notions of a future state, I consider Paine to be quite as much a fanatic in matters of religion as yourself, sir. There is nothing in the Bible, in the Koran, or in the reveries of the late Johanna Southcote, more ridiculous or superstitious than that which may be found in Paine's Theological works, under the head of *My Private Thoughts of a Future State*. I should be very happy, for the honour of Paine, if this paragraph could be proved to have been an interpolation to degrade his other writings, but I fear that it is genuine. I am the disciple of Paine in politics only. I do not go far with him in his theological sentiments. I consider his *Age of Reason* to be a most important and useful book as a primer to true theology."

Nevertheless, Carlile knew how to defend and explain some of Paine's vigorous attacks on that whited sepulchre of Christian phariseeism, the Church. Paine applied the word "adultery" to the union of Church and State. Dr. James Rudge, a minister of Limehouse, addressed a letter to Carlile through the

columns of the *Christian Champion,* in which he stated that he could not explain nor account for Paine's assertion. Carlile replied in a letter dated from Dorchester Gaol, January 10, 1820, showing that Paine's figure was applicable and proper on the following grounds:—

"The Christian Church has ever been closely interwoven with every State in which it has existed..... sometimes the Church has ruled the State, and at other times the State has mastered the Church. For instance, the Christian Church grew up with the decline of the Roman State, and at length prevailed over it; and the offices of State were all continued with, and subservient to, the offices of the Church, till at length the title of Sovereign or Emperor of State sunk into the arms of holy mother Church.....Again, at the period called the Reformation, or more properly speaking, the deviation from a former course, several States became masters of the Roman Church.....The act of adultery becomes applicable to the union of Church and State, because the Church professes to be a wife and a prude, and calls Jesus her spouse, her Lord and Master. The members of the Church affect to be negligent and not to be seeking after the emoluments of the State, whilst, like an unfaithful wife, they are coninually running into this 'adulterous connection,' and studiously beguile the unwary observer with outward professions of purity and chastity. Each sister calls the other the 'Whore of Babylon,' and alternately prays for 'the fall of this great, this drunken whore, whose abominations pollute the earth.' This, you will say, is coarse and vulgar language. But recollect it is not the language of my mind. It is the language of what you call Scripture, and a just quotation and application."

Carlile's memoir of Paine, written in Dorchester

Gaol, was an excellent piece of work. It said neither too much nor too little and made the personality of the "rebellious needleman" subject to his usefulness, whilst portraying vividly the influence and power of his writings.

XIX.—The Instruction of Youth.

In May, 1821, Carlile completed his *Address to Men of Science,* which he immediately caused to be published as yet another of his Dorchester Bastile's contributions to proletarian literature. Classical scholarship was impeached in its pages as neither giving a polish to manners nor teaching morality. Indeed, the following excerpt reminds one of Spencer at his best in his famous essay on *Education* :—

"It fills the mind with a useless jargon, and enables the possessor now and then to make a tinsel and pompous declaration in half-a-dozen languages; which, if it were to undergo a translation into one language, and that which we call native, would be found to be a mass of unintelligible and unmeaning trash—words of sound, to which it would be difficult to attach an idea and in which all correct notions are wanting. It makes a man a pedant only. Such men have been most aptly termed 'spouters of froth.'"

He now portrays in elegant language the principles of Materialism. The priestly dogma of immortality he dismisses as a ridiculous idea. He adds :—

"Away with the contemptible notion that our bones, our muscles, and our flesh shall be gathered together after they are rotted and evaporated for a resurrection to eternal life. Away with the idea that we have a sensible soul which lives distinct from and

after the dissolution of the body. It is all a bugbear, all a priestly imposture. The chemist can analyse the body of man, and send it into its primitive gaseous state in a few minutes. His crucible and fire, or his galvanic battery, will cause it to evaporate so as not to leave a particle of substance or solid matter. And this chemical process is but an anticipation, or a hastening, of the workings of Nature; for the whole universe might be aptly termed a great chemical apparatus, in which a chemical analysis and a chemical composition is continually and constantly going on. The same might be said of every organized body however large or however minute; its motions produce a constant chemical analysis and composition, a continual change; so that the smallest particle of matter is guided by the same laws, and performs the same duties as the great whole."

Carlile proceeds to impeach the men of science for betraying the purpose of science in their anxiety to crouch to the established tyrannies of kingcraft and priestcraft. He accuses them of adopting the aristocratical distinctions of the day, and of supporting frauds upon mankind it should be their peculiar duty to expose. He arraigns the servile cowardice of Bacon, and exposes the hypocrisy and stupidity of Sir Isaac Newton. The character of the latter he contrasts against that of the more honest Whiston:—

"Newton courted distinction and popularity by servilely succumbing to all the despotisms of the day. Whiston was a man of principle, and lived and died poor for the satisfaction of writing and speaking what he thought and believed. The one has been too much flattered and applauded; the other too much vilified and degraded; and the clamour by which both circumstances have been effected has been equally disgusting and disgraceful to the country."

From these and other facts Carlile concludes that a "misery-begetting splendour" must always be, in reality, opposed to "an advanced state of science," and declares that the ruling-class only make "partial pretensions to patronise the arts and sciences as a cloak for their enmity towards them." Having proceeded to impeach the idle distinctions drawn by law makers, Carlile now adds:—

"It is the duty of the man of science to attack those distinctions, to attack all the established follies of the day, and endeavour to restore society to its natural state; to that state which just principles will point out; the mutual support, the comfort, the happiness, and the protection of each other. At present we are but so many beasts of prey, each strengthening himself by the destruction of his weaker fellow."

He now sees the part played by the Free Press in bringing about this social regeneration, and hails it as the Messiah that "will go on to unite, under the name and title of *man and citizen*, the whole human race, or all those animals who have the gift of speech and its consequent—reason."

Returning to his impeachment of men of science for their cowardice, he declares that he is determined to break down all attempts to treat knowledge as contraband goods, and announces his willingness to publish the sentiments of any scientific thinker without danger to the latter, by standing between him and prosecution.

This brilliant essay then goes on to propound a system not merely of secular instruction, but a free school that really anticipates all the principles of Ferrer's Modern School. Carlile has no faith in ancient geography, since it really inculcates Imperialism. He wished to abolish from the curriculum for the young all mythology and classical literature. Homer,

Hesiod, Horace, etc., he would have none of. But he wants children to be taught how to read and write their native tongue and trained in all the departments of mathematics, so that their reasons might be developed and strengthened. He also expresses his contempt for the interested gossip that passes muster for history. A striking contribution to the literature of freedom was this iconoclastic brochure composed inside the Dorchester bastile.

XX.—Jail Wisdom.

Throughout his incarceration Carlile's vigorous pen continued to expose the abuses of our class society and its corrupt governmentalism in the columns of the *Republican*.

The following observations, culled from his prison essays, are replete with courage, power, and good sense:—

"Weak men are apt to listen to a judge with the same feelings as a Roman Catholic would listen to the Pope."

"Where a great portion of society live in luxury and idleness on the produce of the remaining portion, there is sure to be distress and wretchedness."

"Men who are ever ready to make themselves subservient to despotism on an extended scale, are always ready to display a local despotism within their own bounds of rule."

"Religion takes the human mind away from the care of its own parent, the body, and whilst setting it up as an object for separate consideration, destroys or injures both the parent and its offspring."

"There is no such place as heaven and consequently no such God as dwells in heaven."

"Daring and unblushing Atheism is creeping abroad and saturating the working population, which are the proper persons to be saturated with it. I look at no others. It has been said to me by more than one person: 'Let us write in the style of Hume and Gibbon, and seek readers among the higher classes.' I answer no; I know nothing of the so-called higher classes but that they are robbers; I will work towards the raising of the working population above them. And this is now in admirable progress. The Mechanics' Institutes will finally settle the question as to which shall be the higher class. I, as a mechanic, dare the Theism of any man to the proof. I, as a mechanic, will allow no class to be higher than myself."

"It is the bounden duty of every man openly to avow whatever his mind conceives to be the truth. If he shrinks from that he is a coward—a slave to the opinions of other men."

"Any man in this country might write or preach delusion as long as he pleases, without any fear of interruption by the magistrate."

"A man is not honest who is not bold enough to be honest, and active enough not to neglect that which he ought to do. Everything in human action may be resolved into right or wrong, and even *to neglect to do right is to do wrong.*"

"The man that is a suffering pauper to-day has no chance of recovering himself; you may give him a full meal and clothe him, but a few days reduces him to the state where you found him. Nature requires continual aid and sustenance, both in her animal and vegetable properties. One watering of a plant in a dry season will not be sufficient to save it; it wants

almost a daily moisture to save it from withering. Such is the case with human nature."

"A revolt against tyranny is an act that will at all times stand applauded and justified on the records of human society. Society, like the human mind and body, has a continual tendency to corruption, unless it can be placed on a self-renovating basis. Nothing but a revolution can remove a deep-rooted corruption; hence revolutions are much to be desired when necessary. The dread and fear of a revolution will pass away by the time we have experienced a few more of them, and each succeeding one will display to a greater extent its utility, and be effected with less bloodshed."

"I have heard the military styled 'Famine Guards,' and I do not know a more appropriate epithet for them. For the greater the distress, and the greater the danger to those who employ the military, they are sure to be better fed and paid, and their favour and protection courted until they feel a sense of importance."

"To petition is to become frivolous and degrading, and to meet for the purpose dangerous. To complain is sedition; and to say that this state of things is not a visitation of God is blasphemy. Therefore those who have neither labour nor food must perish quietly and be thankful; and those who have a little of either must be contented; for the slightest murmur is now construed to be 'against the peace of our Lord the King,' and dissatisfaction and rebellion 'against the dictates of heaven.' To doubt this is impiety; and obstinate doubt, however virtuous, is punishable blasphemy! This state is decreed to continue until resistance to it shall be found practicable; and whenever practicable, it shall be decreed to be just."

"Every attempt at insurrection will become more and more formidable until at last it will become effectual. They may hang or transport a few hundreds or

thousands, but the spirit will increase; and the more the people are inured to the shedding of blood, the less will be their scruples to retaliate. It is astonishing to see how the lessons and experience of history are lost on kings and rulers; they proceed with a blind infatuation, as if they were omnipotent; and are not to be awakened to danger until they feel themselves in the vortex of destruction. Power has, most certainly, a tendency to bind and corrupt the mind, where it is not the offspring of knowledge."

"It is folly to talk of the weapons of reason, when they are met by those of a conscious and malignant ridicule. What does such a man as Castlereagh or Canning care about the weapons of reason? They will continue to smile securely, while the weapons of reason are hurled at them unsupported by some powerful arguments.....They laugh at us, and shake the keys of the dungeon and the halter in our faces, and point to their standing army as their last resource.....What effect had the reasoning of our Colonial brethren in the United States? They reasoned and they petitioned, and they were laughed at, and threatened with military execution. They prepared to meet the military execution, and what followed? Let the reasoner speak. Show me a state of oppression and despotism that was ever overthrown by the weapons of reason alone, and I, for one, will be forward to acquiesce in your pacific reasoning. Our late king had sufficient good sense to tell Bishop Watson, that the sharper a conflict was, the sooner it was over, and the less destructive it became. I am quite of his opinion, and therefore on the score of humanity, I am for *pointed and urgent reasons.*"

"Royalty is a species of sacred mystery, whom no one can rightly define but those who have access to it. And those may be considered a species of priests, who will never open the eyes of the people to a true know-

ledge of that which supports themselves in luxury and idleness. It is a political *sanctum sanctorium* which has put to death the stranger who has drawn aside the veil."

"Four centuries have not yet elapsed since the invention of printing, and in no country in Europe has a free and unrestricted Press yet existed; yet it has produced, with all its shackles, a manifest and irrevocable change in society. The will and edict of tyrants are now printed and laughed at, and every despot finds it necessary to corrupt a great portion of the Press of the country in which he dwells to preserve his existence. They are now compelled to purchase that base adulation, which a great portion of the daily and other periodical portion of the Press abounds in, with caresses and gold. This, in a great measure, unarms the despot and renders him less destructive than formerly; he is compelled to put on a hollow and false outside, that his adulators may find some apparent excuse for his inhumanities. In fact, his whole despotic career is now necessarily performed by a sort of agency to hide its hideous features and screen the real actor."

"Literature and knowledge on all subjects may now be considered exciseable articles throughout Europe, and the poor obtain but little more than might be said to be smuggled among them by word of mouth. The indolent and lazy read and tremble, lest the discoveries they daily make should extend among the poorer classes. The boldest warrior is now more alarmed at paper shot than those of lead. The prostituted portion of the Press is become the basis of all European Governments, and war is declared against the portion that dares to be honest."

"He who sets himself up as an instructor to his fellowman should offer nothing but what is clear and

intelligible to all who should read what he wrote. The fine figurative writer will, in future ages, be read with disdain and contempt. The daily avocations of those who labour for a livelihood are such that they have not time to unriddle figurative writings, such as the Bible and many other books abound in. They stand in need of that mental refreshment which is as simple as the diet they make use of."

"It is reason that endows man with the gift of speech; without reason he could not communicate an idea but by dumb show. His voice would be of no further use to him than the power of barking to a dog or of braying to an ass. It is evident that without reason man would be a beast of the forest, and a prey to many a stronger animal. And yet this glorious light of reason becomes a dreadful eyesore to the priest! And for why? Because the priests of all ages, of all sects, and of all doctrines, impose nothing but error and falsehood on the multitude, and they find their doctrines rejected by those of the multitude who exercise their reason. This is an assertion that bids defiance to contradiction."

Carlile also observed that "the priest who is about to take holy orders is necessitated to vow in the church, before the bishop, that he does not seek the office for the sake of lucre, but that he is impelled by the holy ghost!" After such a base perversion of his reason and sense of shame, it seemed to Carlile inevitable that the priest "should studiously endeavour to degrade every other person to the same level, as a cloak and a safeguard against his own infamy, perjury, and villainy."

He pointed out that he could never hear ministers talk about providing for the splendour of the Crown without "viewing it as the act of an insolvent tradesman who has driven a career of misconduct so far that

he finds himself on the eve of dissolution, in point of business, and endeavours to delay the evil day by seeking to obtain credit by a more splendid show in dress and manners. Any attempt to give pauperism a false and pretended splendour is only calculated to excite ridicule towards it; and to attempt to attach splendour to a throne that is founded on pauperism makes the person who fills it but a splendid pauper, and exposes him to ridicule and contempt."

XXI.—Struggle.

Throughout his struggle with the Vice Society and the Government, Carlile was supported loyally by his wife, Jane Carlile. The latter was seven years his senior and had made his acquaintance whilst he was on a visit to Gosport in 1813. They were married after a courtship of only two months duration. Finding that their temperaments were incompatible, they wisely agreed to separate in the year 1819, but postponed putting this resolution into effect owing to their common determination to resist the Government's attempt to suppress Paine's writings and other radical literature.

Jane Carlile possessed talents for business that were of the greatest value to Richard in his self-appointed task of agitator. He was bent on propagandism and paid no heed to business details. She deemed them vital to the success of his propagandism. But these outlooks that linked them in purpose opposed them in disposition. Also she was hot tempered whereas he was cool but resolute, which, in domestic life, means obstinate. Hence they tolerated rather than loved each other.

In January, 1821, the authorities, who had wasted a good deal of time in threatening, arresting, and then releasing Jane Carlile, brought the numerous indictments against her to a trial and she was sent to join him for two years in Dorchester prison. She welcomed him back to liberty on his release, and finally separated from him in 1832.

During her imprisonment Jane Carlile's place was taken in the shop by Richard's sister, Mary Carlile. She was, in turn, sent to gaol and succeeded by the now famous but then much abused shopmen and shopwomen, all of whom not only volunteered for the task, but defended themselves in order that their defence might evince their defiance. Prominent among these heroes of civil liberty were :—

Name	Date of Conviction	Length of Sentence
Susannah Wright	Nov. 14, 1822 ...	Two years
James Watson	Apr. 23, 1823 ...	Twelve months
Richard Hassell	May 28, 1824 ...	Two years
William Campion	June 8, 1824 ...	Three years
John Clarke	June 10, 1824 ...	Three years

Besides these the following toed the line :—

1820—Joseph Swann, four and a half years; Thomas Tyler, three months.

1822—Samuel Waddington, one year; Humphrey Boyle, twenty-three months; Charles Trust, six months and £20 fine; Joseph Rhodes, Joseph William Trust, William Holmes, two years each; William Rance, Charles Sanderson, Turner, Atkinson, one year each; John Barkley, six months.

1823—William Tunbridge, two years; James Watson, one year; John Jones, six months; William Clarke, four months.

1824—William Haley, T. R. Perry, three years each; T. Jefferies, eighteen months; W. Cochrane, J. Christopher, M. J. O'Connor, six months each; James Affleck, three months.

In each case the charge was based on the sale of Paine's much dreaded writings, or Palmer's work, or Carlile's *Life of Paine,* or a current *Republican,* or Shelley's *Queen Mab.* In all, 150 persons suffered incarceration for acting as Carlile's agents in this struggle.

In 1823, Lord Chief Justice Abbott intimated that enough had been done in the way of prosecuting Carlile and his shopmen ; and the following year it was understood that the Cabinet had, in council, acknowledged Carlile invincible in the course of moral resistance which he had taken. No more persons were arrested from his shop and not one of his publications had been suppressed. But Sir Robert Peel insisted that his shopmen and shopwomen should serve their full sentences.

Carlile was freed suddenly from prison on November 18, 1825. Without any compromise on his part, his recognizances had been abrogated, and he had been swept out of gaol bag and baggage. This quitting gaol meant no more to him mentally than a change of lodging. He resolved that his course should be onward, and that he would continue the same disposition, unimpaired, with which he began his pioneer career—a disposition to suffer fines, imprisonment, or banishment, rather than any man should hold the power and have the audacity to say or decide that any kind of public discussion was improper and publicly injurious.

Eight years later, addressing himself to Lord Brougham through the medium of the *Gauntlet,*

Carlile proudly and wisely declared: "I have accomplished the liberty of the Press in England, and oral discussion is now free. Nothing remains to be reformed but the ignorance and vices of the people, whose ignorance cannot be removed while their bodies are starved and their Church remains a theatre of idolatry and superstition." Holyoake well describes these words as the history of Carlile's life, the eulogy of his career, the witnesses of his political and religious penetration. Certainly his struggle put down Government prosecution. But it also secured to the poor the unstamped Press. Watson, one of the shopmen, who went to prison for selling Carlile's publications, persuaded Henry Hetherington to establish a workman's newspaper in defiance of the Government. Hetherington, who was two years Carlile's junior, consequently established his *Poor Man's Guardian* and *Poor Man's Conservative*. They were both unstamped. This was in 1831. Within three years over 750 men and women went to gaol for selling them. Some went several times. On the last prosecution of Hetherington, Lord Lyndhurst, a Tory judge, exhibited disgust with the prosecution, and practically told the jury to legalize the sale. This was done, and the stamp tax prosecution collapsed. Carlile's policy won the day. Knowledge became a public right.

After this, the Guildhall—at which interested persons were continually proceeding against Carlile and his supporters for "sedition" and "blasphemy"—became ashamed of its notoriety in this respect. Four decades later, the Bow Street Court upheld a prosecution for sedition where the Guildhall refused to look at the repetition of the offence, the Guildhall refusal leading to the squashing of the Bow Street indictment. Of a truth, Carlile's defiance had proven victorious.

XXII.—Anti-Militarist Publisher.

One of the two Press Acts, passed specially for Carlile's benefit during his imprisonment, imposed the newspaper stamp upon all pamphlets of a republican, atheistic, or deistic tendency that were published at less price than sixpence and on so small a quantity as two sheets of paper. It exempted every pamphlet written in defence of Christianity and the Constitution. Thus the Christian and the Governmentalist could defend the powers that be in a fourpenny pamphlet. The rebel could not reply, in a pamphlet of the same size, under sixpence. Republican and Atheist publishers were also required to find sureties before they could publish their educational tracts, and also to deposit original MSS. with the authorities, with name and address of the author written across them. Carlile knew how to deal with this terrorism. He found no sureties, paid no tax, deposited no MSS., and informed on no authors. His policy he declared to be founded on the duty of resisting the "imposition of a duty on political information for the better preservation of ignorance amongst the labouring classes."

In pursuit of this policy he became the responsible publisher of four character studies from the pen of *Philanthropos*. Each of these character studies were published at twopence. They were unstamped, and, admittedly, both "seditious" and "blasphemous." The authorities never learnt the real name of their author. In the first of these essays the latter impeaches the thronged congregation of rogues, slaves, and fools who worship at the shrine of avarice, and estimate merit in the terms of money. He adds:—

"The passions of distrust, revenge, fear, hatred, malice, and cruelty distract the rich, that thrive by

treachery, hypocrisy, tyranny, and rapacity. Conscious of turpitude, stung by remorse, alarmed for the safety of ill-gotten gains, the robbers and impostors are afraid the people will claim a restitution of rights and property."

Our author then proceeds to defend human nature and the poor against the slanders of the interested defenders of despotism, the pampered and bloated hypocrites who riot upon the poor man's industry, carouse upon the sweat of his brow, and sack the spoil of the criminal their rapacity has created. He concludes with the following advice to these gentlemen:—

"*Tyrants and impostors, remember you are splendid at the expense of honesty, pain, disease, and death!* Give the people justice and they will be laborious; if they are laborious they must have plenty, and if they have plenty they will be honest. Men are naturally innocent, passive, and pacific; false information and injustice are the sources of violence and crime. Remember this, you corporate impostors and tyrants, and correct your own errors before you brand the innocent with infamy. Cast the beams out of your own eyes before you shed acrimonious calumny upon the virtuous and the just."

But *Philanthropos's* best effort was the pamphlet in which he delineated the characteristics of a soldier. The latter he defines as being a brute, a biped, an erect, unique, and horrible monster; the most cold-blooded animal; a bloody automaton or infernal machine having the power of locomotion and a great thirst for human blood. He denies *it* the name of man, and refuses to disgrace man by putting it by his side. *It* meditates "upon its work of destruction, of voracity, upon its sanguinary repast for years before its preternatural appetite is feasted with human gore,"

and "hires itself out for a small sum to be the butcher of the human race"; "to slay men, to slaughter the innocent or the guilty, as it may be ordered"; "to shed blood; to push its sabre of death into the breast of innocent men, women, and children; to see the blood follow its blow; to withdraw the scythe reeking from the wound; to see the heart's blood bubble up in crimson froth; to see the victim fall, distorted, convulsed, agonised, and every pore pouring forth the cold clammy sweat of death."

All this is "ecstasy" to the "male animal that hires itself out to slaughter the human species..... wholesale or retail, in units or in thousands." That is why "privileged rogues work with it."

"It engages to cut any man's throat when ordered; to level with cannon, to mow down with the sword or with musketry, unarmed or armed men. The more wounds and blood, and mutilations and deaths, the more honours; the more shrieks and screams, and widows and orphans, and gore, the more laurels, medals, and rejoicings. The heart of the soldier is as cold as lead, as callous as flint; all the finer energies and soothing sympathies of the human soul are frozen up; an exsicated feeling, a phlegmatic apathy, obscures and eclipses the dignified sensations of man."

Our author goes on to desire an ingenuity that shall "make manifest the terrific, the murderous workings of the soldier's heart"; a transparency that shall reveal "his servility, his sneaking sycophancy, and his mutual tyranny; his daily hope of slaughter for the sake of promotion and of gathering crimson-blooded laurels." If only the soldier changed his person on the day he entered the ranks; if "but as great a metamorphosis took place in body as in mind.....he would be one of the most hideous objects that could be conceived or pictured"; if only his "breast was dia-

phanous, his ebony heart would show all those horrible, those base, those degrading passions."

"He prays to see fields deluged, the earth fertilized with blood; the birds, and grass, and herbs fat and luxuriant from feeding upon human flesh and fluids.....to hear the winds loaded with the sighs, the sobs, and groans of helpless wives and orphans.....to see the pearly eye bedewed with tears, swollen, red, and wild, in its watching and distraction.....the cold, haggard, motionless, oblivious hand of death.....fall upon his companion, his superior, his commander."

Philanthropos concludes with advocating the boycott and manifestation of contempt for the soldier:—

"What child can respect such a father? What father can respect such a son? What wife, possessing all the generous sympathy of human kindness, can caress such a husband?.....If the soldier should be so misled, so ignorant, so barbarous, so bloody-minded as to hire himself out as a *man-killer* to some regal impostor; if he is so foolish as to sacrifice his life, his health, or his family, other men should not countenance him, should not associate with him, should not in any manner be connected with a monster that has turned their enemy, the common destroyer of human life. The soldier should be scouted by every citizen, whose common enemy he is. A standing army is a legalized banditti, inasmuch as it robs and murders under the name of law, and so evades the gibbet; the last may be extirpated and the body politic may be relieved of the nuisance, but the former is a cancer corroding the vitals of the country.....*Regimentals are the livery of the licensed murderer of mankind.*"

If Carlile had done nothing beyond publishing this pamphlet he would have deserved our regard as an anti-militarist pioneer.

XXIII.—Exposing Freemasonry.

Another important task to which Carlile addressed himself towards the end of his Dorchester Bastile sojourn was that of teaching Masonry to the Masons. His exposure was published serially in the *Republican.* After his release Carlile revised and reprinted this work, in volume form with additional prefaces, as a *Manual of Masonry.* It has since become a classic on the subject. But his introductions to each of the three parts of the *Manual* are more important than the body of his exposure.

With characteristic directness, Carlile affirms that all that the masons know of their Freemasonry is a blank. There is a secret connected with association, but, for masons, it is a grand lost secret. For they are only to be numbered among the vulgar and the superstitious, who have received exoteric esoteric doctrine. The secret principle of Freemasonry is identical with the secret principle of Judaism and Christianity. It is Sun-worship and Science as the basis of human culture and disciple. It is the common Paganism of the human race. Consequently, every Grecian and Roman sage who sought to understand the Pagan mysteries was a mason. "But," adds Carlile, "the modern masons are not very worthy disciples of those ancient men."

Defining the proper business of a mason, he says: "A good mason would in fact have no superstition. It should be his boast that his science takes him out of modern religion. He who can build Solomon's Temple, in the allegorical sense, is disqualified from being a fanatic."

A temple is a record of time and an archive of know-

ledge. The ancient temples were intended to serve this purpose, but the interpreters of knowledge declined into a priesthood and evolved an esoteric doctrine for private use and an exoteric doctrine for the multitude. From science they turned to priestcraft. "Let us," comments Carlile, "endeavour to turn the stream; to go from priestcraft to science, from mystery to knowledge, from allegory to real history."

The first temples, he continued, were dedicated to the sun, and the first principles of religion consisted of a scientific record of the sun's annual path through the signs of the Zodiac. Poetic fiction allegorized the polar motions of the earth which cause the sun to appear in a state of birth, growth, maturity, decay, and death, in the course of a year, producing our seasons. The year is complete when the sun appears to return to a given spot from which it is said to start. Hence religious festivals at fixed seasons, and all that has been invented about God and gods, new-born god, living god, dying god, descending god, resurrection god, ascending god. From which Carlile concludes: "There is no plain historical truth, no revelation about God in existence, other than those of the relations of the sun to the planets and stars in physics, and the cultivation of the human mind in morals."

The building of the Temple, therefore, is "nothing more than an allegory relating to the mystery of physics generally, and the moral culture of the human mind. Hence the real secret of masonry." The Jews, he declares again, "were a religious or philosophic sect, who had been made adepts in the higher Pagan mysteries; a sect among nations, but not a nation among sects."

The word *Eleusis* in the Greek is identical with *Advent* in the Christian mystery and means *The Coming,* literally *the coming of light.* The story of

the transfiguration is an imperfect description of the holding of a Lodge of association in the highest degree of the Eleusinian mystery. The turning of water into wine is the process of vinous vegetation, and one of the mysteries of Bacchus. The watering pots at the marriage at Cana in Galilee are those of Aquarius, or watery season, and the miracle symbolizes the ripening of the grape. Bacchus did literally turn water into wine. He does so every year. The feeding of the multitude with a few small loaves and fishes is another annual mystery. It symbolizes the prolific power of the earth in the growth of corn, and of the water in the production of fishes. The sacrament of The Lord's Supper is the joint mystery of the union of Ceres and Bacchus—the deities of bread and wine—in an allegorical physical sense, the real body and blood of the Sun-god or Christ principle. Freemasonry is a misunderstood, corrupted, continuation of these ancient mysteries. It is illegitimate mystery, a base concealment of truth that ought to be revealed. "The ancient priests," concludes Carlile, "thought that knowledge should be concealed from the multitude, or found it profitable that it should be so; and hence our sacred and mysterious writings. But now we do not think *that* knowledge should be kept from the multitude, and hence our infidelity and our revealings!"

This leads Carlile to the following confession of faith:—

"Here we are, like other animals, *for life, and nothing more;* and it will be wise if we so carry ourselves, as to enjoy the greatest possible amount of happiness, and to make it an essential and primitive point of that happiness, to inflict no pain on man, woman, child, or other animal.....I strive to be the most useful and most important man living.....We have seen enough

of the mischief of monarchy and priestcraft, of mystery, sectarianism, and secret societies. Let us now be open, be inquisitive, and be equal in knowledge. Any secret *recipe* for human disorder is but murder towards those who need it and cannot reach it. I rejoice in having no secrets; I rejoice in being able to expose to the world the professed secrets of others. I am sure that secrecy is a vice; and I therefore expose and explain Freemasonry."

Interpreting the language of the Gospel, Carlile declares that: A second birth, said to be the incarnation of God or Christ in man, and essential to human salvation from evil, means birth of mind or mental culture; prayer means the expenditure of the labour necessary to acquire culture; worship, repentance, peace, goodwill, all applicable to, expressive of, and relating to culture. Christ is not a man, not a being, but a principle manifest in condition, the best culture of the human mind, the best action that can be educed from the man. Soul has no other meaning than mind, no other physical origin or existence. Without cultivation there is no second birth, no mind nor soul.

The mysteries of Judaism, Christianity, and Masonry have degraded man by ignorantly substituting for the truth revealed the letter of the mystery that reveals it. The true revelation is that man is a creature to be improved by knowledge; time is material to that end; labour essential. Hence the degrees of Masonry, the Entered Apprentice, the Fellow Craft, the Grand Master. All this is symbolized in the building of Solomon's Temple, which is the gist of Masonry.

Carlile attacks the superstitionists for confounding sacred with profane history and defines the difference: Fane or temple history is a record of universal principles relating to the whole human race, and not a record of the acts of a particular people at a particular

time or in a particular country; the latter record is profane. It is also uncanonical or apocryphal. By reducing fane history to profane, and regarding it as true of his particular race at a particular time, the mistaken Jew treated the sacred Scriptures as a sectarian charm. The Christian, though also confusing sacred and profane history, believes that the principles apply to all mankind. In the abstract more philanthropic than the Jew, his zeal for conversion makes him more intolerant and destructive than the Jew. Masonry, therefore, is more like Judaism, since it employs mystery and symbols to exclude a large portion of mankind from the benefit of cultivation, of the necessary revelation of truth.

Carlile adds some fine truths:—

"Tell me not, that the safety of a country is in its superstition, or in its secret and mysterious bands; I know it to be safe only where knowledge is dispersing its superstition and mysteries in a submission to and a unity of sentiment founded upon that knowledge."

"To get rid of the mysteries will be to make a holy land of every country. This is revelation."

"The spirit of the warfare among the cross degrees of Masonry means a warfare with superstition and mystery. The meaning of the church militant is lost to those who have made a mystery of Christianity without retaining the revelation. The church militant is the church of people fighting against error, mystery, superstition, idolatry, with no other weapon than revelation, knowledge, reason, where that is sharp enough. The sword of steel should never be used but on the defensive. I claim the distinction of having been the best and most enduring soldier of Jesus Christ that the Church has produced within these last fifteen hundred years, a true and trusty Knight Templar, using the right weapons in the right way."

"The true secret of universal brotherhood must be in equality of knowledge, and honesty of its application. All other pretence is trick, deceit, and inefficiency. Masonry, in its mysterious ceremony, makes this pretence; but it is a failure, everywhere a failure, in relation to universality. And it is only by construing the spirit of Masonry to mean a universal equality of knowledge that its profession of brotherhood can be sustained."

"Life may be said to have two departments, or to be of two distinct kinds—the physical and the moral; the sensual and the intellectual; the latter growing out of, and being closely intertwined with the other. Superstition has inverted the order, and made the latter the creative power of the former; the intellectual of the sensual, or the moral of the physical. This is the grand mistake!"

XXIV.—With Robert Taylor.

This brings us to February 7, 1828, when Robert Taylor was sentenced to one year's imprisonment for blasphemy and ordered to find recognizances for his good behaviour for five years in £1,000. Carlile at once identified himself with Taylor and toured the country lecturing on Taylor's behalf. He had concluded the *Republican* with his release from prison, and now commenced the *Lion* in order to rally sympathy to Taylor and provide him with a medium of expression. Although his shopmen and shopwomen were still in prison, his release in 1825 had marked the end of Press persecution, and he now determined to establish the equal right of untrammelled oral discussion. Carlile made full use of the *Lion's* columns

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for the employment of his own versatile pen. "There cannot be a superstitious civilization," was one of the maxims he proclaimed. Protestantism came under his lash in the following terse indictments:—

"The Protestant faith includes all that faith which protests against the Roman Catholic faith; but reasons for that protest, which would not apply as forcibly to the Protestant faith, I have never met."

"The last fires in Smithfield were Protestant fires; the last religious murders in England were Protestant murders. All the religious persecutions of the last two centuries in England and Scotland—and they form the blackest period of England's ecclesiastical history—have been Protestant persecutions; not the persecution of Protestants by Catholics, but the persecution of Catholics, Protestants, and Infidels, by Protestants."

Youthful readers of the *Lion* were counselled by its editor not to misemploy their hours, or waste away their lives in the wretched manner so many young people did, "only existing as useless drones 'who crawl upon the surface of the earth to consume its produce.'" He insisted on the honour and profit accruing from an early and persistent attention to mental development. Method was his antidote for longing and trifling.

Oath-making he denounces as a vice on the ground that "the principle induced is that of fear, and whatever is done through fear, which would have been done in the absence of fear, is viciously done. Thus, upon the highest pretension that has yet been made for the practice of oath-making—that of its being a necessary binding to a purpose, which binding is to be produced through the operation of fear—vice is exhibited; and oath-making is, in its best sense, a vice. It supposes vice in its presumed necessity, and proves it in its prac-

tice. It engenders the vice against which it would be presumed to guard us."

"The New Testament," he argues, "is the only religious book in the world that positively forbids oath-making as a vice; yet its so-called defenders are the most prone to practice it."

The oath is no pledge of truth either in the believer or the unbeliever: "The good man of either party will do as well without it; the bad man of either party will do as ill with it; and each alike, in not respecting that which he professed to respect.....An idle charm is uttered, and a dirty book is lipped, with as little failing as any other animal may be brought to the practice. A trial cannot be witnessed at the Old Bailey without the perception that the swearing is superfluous, and not useful to guide or correct the evidence to be given. If the oath were valued as giving weight to the evidence, cross-examination would be a very great presumption; for it presumes that the oath has not given weight to the evidence, and that it cannot give it weight."

Carlile concludes that the history of oath-making shows it to have "been established upon the idolatry of mankind," and only available where idolatry continues to exist. Idolatry, superstition, and oath-making must fall in company.

To hasten the day of that collapse Carlile indicted "belief" and "faith" in the following terms: "Tell me there is a peculiar kind of animal or vegetable in China of which I have not seen the like in this country and I can credit your tale, because I see a variety of animals and vegetables the product of this country. But tell me of heaven and hell, of gods, devils, and angels, of future states of existence to continued or reproduced identities, and I cannot credit your tale because I have no analogy, in the literal

sense, whereupon to proceed to conjecture, and because I do not see material identities so composed and decomposed, as to leave me any idea of other existence for those identities. The earth is all sufficient to produce and sustain them as compositions and to receive them as decompositions.

"All faith is in danger because faith has no relation to the knowledge of mankind. All faith is in danger because faith has no relation to the welfare of mankind. All faith is in danger because it injures and disorders mankind. All faith is in danger because it is a cheat upon mankind. All faith is in danger because it is openly and ably assailed by infidelity. All faith is in danger because truth exhibited must triumph over it."

Following the practice that he had pursued in the columns of the *Republican,* Carlile several times openly addressed himself to the King and the leading ministers of State through the medium of the *Lion.* The following pungent extract from his second letter to the King is typical of the fearlessness of expression that distinguished all Carlile's writings:—

"Henry the VIII found dissensions of 400 years standing on doctrinal points in the English part of the Church of Rome. He determined that those dissensions should cease. He wrote, disputed, burnt opponents, obtained from the Pope—for his zeal—the title of defender of the (Popish) faith, immediately destroyed the faith and lessened the Pope's authority, and retained and has handed down to you most inviolately the contradictory title! He did everything religiously, *but that which he royally determined and pledged himself to do.* Whatever he determined to do in promise broke away under him, and his effected determination ended in doing something contrary to the promised determination. He promised to defend

the uniformity of the faith of the Romish Church, which he irrevocably drove from the country. All his children were placed in similar dilemmas. The Stuarts, from the first to the last, played a similar game, with worse consequences to themselves. Your family of the Guelphs has been whirled about in a similar religious vortex, until you find all establishment, and even all sects, breaking away from your grasp ; and the man would be rash that should attempt to predict what will be the last point of faith your majesty shall defend. Faith is not a thing or principle to be established or defended. I hold by far the better and more dignified title, as the assailant of all and every faith.....Your priests cannot support you, nor you them. You are as chaff before free discussion. Enveloped in the mantle of free discussion, I feel and exhibit more moral power than the royally-robed defender of faith can exhibit. I am the greater man."

XXV.—Further Trials and Imprisonment.

In 1829 Carlile celebrated Taylor's release from prison by establishing Sunday morning adult school Bible discussions, thus anticipating the modern Quaker adult school movement in much the same way as his colleague anticipated the orthodox Christian Evidence Society. Three months later Carlile and Taylor entered upon an infidel and republican mission through the north of England. On their return to London they opened up, on May 30, 1830, the Rotunda—the one-time famous music-hall in Blackfriars Road or Great Surrey Street as it was called—as a Freethought Coliseum. The Rotunda had been, in turn, a natural history museum, a literary "Surrey Institute," a

music-hall, a circus, and a home of panorama. Coleridge had delivered his lectures on Shakespeare from its platform ; and Hazlitt had delighted audiences thereform with his lectures on *The Comic Writers of England*. It now became the home of Robert Taylor's interesting extravaganzas, more scholastically known as astronomico-theological orations. Taylor possessed an eloquence and wit, not uncoupled with a power of research, that made a little truth go a long way. His orations at the Rotunda were published weekly under the title of *The Devil's Pulpit*. Their author thought this pulpit "a bonnie one," and thus styled his performances owing to Henry Hunt having bestowed on him the dignity of *The Devil's Chaplain*. Local circumstances led Taylor to make capital out of this fact. The Rotunda was less than 200 yards distant from the old Surrey Chapel, which the Rev. Rowland Hill—uncle of Postmaster-General Rowland Hill, of penny-postage fame—founded and opened in 1783. He had the chapel built circular in shape so that the Devil should not find a corner in it ! Taylor held it desirable that His Satanic Majesty's chaplain should found his pulpit in close approximation to the chapel. Hence the title of his orations.

The Rowland Hill family probably regarded the Rotunda platform as of the Devil for quite other reasons than its religious teachings, for it rapidly became a capitol of public virtue and palladium of social liberty. From its pulpit the genius of contemporary revolt attacked the shams and shibboleths of a civilization diseased to putrefaction. The less virtuous talent of mere revisionism also sent its representatives to plead for the acceptance of their ameliorative measures. Defiance had nothing to fear from free discussion. The economic oppressions were freely canvassed and their causes and cure vigorously

considered. The proletarian audiences were invited to discuss the savage mummeries of monarchism as a mimicry of ancient folly. A self-seeking, self-state-subsidizing, religiously hypocritical family, such as that of the Rowland-Hill, could hardly view the principles publicly propagated at the Rotunda meetings with other than a disdain that only concealed its alarm. Truly, the Devil had been reincarnated!

Seven months after he opened the Rotunda, Carlile established his *Prompter,* because he thought the nation needed a prompter! This was on November 13, 1830. Three days before, the Government attempted to raise a tumult at the Rotunda and surrounded it with military. Its plans miscarried, and Carlile's coolness reduced the whole affair to a farce. Military surrounded the place at 10 p.m., and Carlile was called on to lead a revolution by the officer commanding. Carlile refused to stir or to open the doors of the Rotunda to the military when ordered. The result was that, after two hours' incitement to riot, the Government's conspiracy fizzled out without harming any of the Advanced Guard of Revolt!

Not so the Governmental vendetta! On January 10, 1831, Carlile was further incarcerated for a period of thirty-two months for sedition. This charge was based on the advice he addressed to the insurgent agricultural labourers, encouraging them to continue their strike and career of revolt. He told them that it was wrong to destroy wealth, but that they had more just and moral cause for wasting property and burning farm produce than ever king or faction that ever made war had for making war. In war all destruction of property was counted lawful. Upon the ground of that, which was called a law of nations, Carlile told them theirs was a state of war, and their quarrel was the want of the necessaries of life in the midst of

abundance. Further Governmental severity of repression would warrant their resistance even to death and to life for life. The issues Carlile impressed upon them in the following terms:—

"You see hoards of food, and you are starving; you see a Government rioting in every sort of luxury and wasteful expenditure, and you, ever ready to labour, cannot find one of the comforts of life. Neither your silence nor your patience has obtained for you the least respectful attention from that Government. The more tame you have grown, the more you have been oppressed and despised, the more you have been trampled on; and it is only now that you begin to display your physical as well as your moral strength that your cruel tyrants treat with you and offer you terms of pacification."

The indictment also garbled an article that Carlile published in No. 3 of *The Prompter,* attacking constitutional monarchy. Carlile described it as "mimicking absolute monarchy and perpetuating all ancient follies and abuses." He also said: "A list of officers in the King's household is the most ludicrous and ridiculous thing that can be read. It will not bear mention in the present day, and is of itself an evidence that a constitutional monarchy is a most ridiculous state of government."

Six months later Robert Taylor was imprisoned a second time for blasphemy.

These imprisonments roused great public indignation and Carlile received handsome support and many expressions of good-will. Responding to one of these, he said: "It may seem strange, but, whether from habit or what else, it is no less true that in the course of our great political struggle I like a gaol, and am more happy here than I can possibly be anywhere else, until the time of our final triumph."

Carlile also expressed his philosophical resignation in the following lines addressed, in the fourth month of this imprisonment, to his friend, Julian Hibbert :—

"I in this sweet retirement find
A joy unknown to kings,
For sceptres to a virtuous mind
Seem vain and empty things.

"Tumultuous joys and restless nights
Ambition ever knows
A stranger to the calm delights
Of study and repose."

Carlile turned his cell in the Giltspur Street Compter into a veritable library and editor's sanctum, and devoted himself to his literary activity with his usual energy.

At the end of two years' imprisonment the Government sent a warrant to the prison governor ordering Carlile's release on condition that one of the two sureties for the fine should be retained. Carlile refused these terms. A month later the Government remitted the fine entirely on condition that Carlile gave his personal recognisances in £500. Carlile refused to give any recognisances. The Government thereupon ordered his unconditional release.

A few weeks later he was re-arrested for his refusal to pay Church rates. These rates were assessed upon his house, 62 Fleet Street. When his goods were seized, he retaliated by taking out the two front windows and placing therein effigies of a bishop, a distraining officer, and a devil. The latter was linked arm-in-arm with the bishop. Crowds were attracted and Carlile was indicted for a nuisance. He made a splendid defence, but was found guilty and sentenced to pay a fine of forty shillings to the King and give sureties, himself in £100 and two others in £50 each,

for good behaviour for three years. Failing this, he was to serve three years' imprisonment.

Before sentence he made a deposition in Court indicating his refusal to pay any fine or to find any surety. The concluding words of this wise and defiant declaration were: "And deponent further saith, that in case the court should think a penalty necessary, this deponent has no other property from which he can pay a fine than printed books; and from the political business in which this deponent is involved, he cannot reasonably ask any other person to become his sureties, that his future proceedings may not be construed into political offence; not but that this deponent is anxious to live in peace and amity with all men, *but that there do exist many political and moral evils which this deponent will, through life, labour to abate.*"

After sentence he wrote: "They have sentenced me to three years' imprisonment. So much for their leniency! It is a mockery to say that I may, if I please, purchase my liberty. I cannot do it. I shall have more liberty in prison than in walking the streets at the discretion of one set of men, and at the hazard of £100 penalty to two others. It is a case in which I will not interfere to abate one hour of the imprisonment. When the gates are open to me I will walk out, but I will not pay or do anything to procure release." He also said that "he would rather be free in prison than shackled outside." And he wrote to the keeper of Newgate to desire that he would get him removed to the Compter. The next week he announced that he "had been removed to his old room."

Four months later the Government ordered his unconditional release. This marked the end of his imprisonments. The total time he had served being nine years seven months and one week. The sentences actually imposed on him were twelve years.

XXVI.—Eliza Sharples.

During the joint visit of Carlile and Taylor to Bolton in 1829 their meetings had been attended by Eliza Sharples, the daughter of Richard Sharples, a Bolton manufacturer of quilts and counterpanes. She had been a close sympathizer with Carlile's writings for some time prior to this, and had seen him a few years before when he visited Liverpool. She was kept at college until well over twenty years of age, and had three sisters and three brothers whose "education" was similarly cared for. She lost her father early in womanhood. She was bitterly opposed to her family on account of their theological opinions and paid regular visits to a local Freethought bookseller named A. Hardie. She confided in him, and on December 5, 1831, he wrote to Carlile, requesting the latter to address a letter to Miss Sharples, care of him, as she was expecting to visit London, and was anxious to organize meetings in Carlile's defence. At this time her age was upwards of twenty-five.

Carlile wrote as requested: "Madam,—I, a bachelor, locked up in prison, am requested to write to a young lady to whom I have had no other introduction than that of being informed that she is young, amiable, beautiful, and has a mind to become a messiah. I will believe in this case without seeing, having more faith than St. Thomas. The Devil tempts me to doubt the good tidings; but I am so much interested in the first English lady who will publicly advocate those truths which are a light needed to remove the present cimmerian darkness that I swear eternal fealty to her before I see her."

By Christmas of this year, she had finally decided that every exertion should be called forth, every effort, every attempt made to enlighten herself first, and then to diffuse that knowledge and instruction to mankind so universally wanted. She openly avowed herself an enemy to every kind of subordination and persecution. She was the foe of kings and priests and lords. She felt proud in being called an infidel, and wished that all mankind felt as she did. "What a reformation, what a glorious reform we should have." This decision was her response to Carlile's hearty, humorous letter. Preparations were made for her visit to London, which she reached on January 12, 1832. She interviewed Carlile in the Compter that day, and reopened the Rotunda for the purposes of delivering philosophic addresses and holding discussions. Seventeen days later she delivered her first lecture there, concealing her identity from the public, and speaking as "The Lady of the Rotunda." Thus described, she lectured here and elsewhere in the Metropolis, on Sundays, and two or three times a week. Being one of the first women to mount the English platform as an independent thinker, she naturally attracted much attention, and the journal which she commenced in February, 1832, *Isis*, found a ready sale.

She now successfully busied herself in seeking to obtain a mitigation of the severities practised on Robert Taylor during his incarceration.

These activities caused Elizabeth's twenty-one-year-old sister, Maria, to write a letter to her, expostulating with her upon her ambition to continue as a public teacher of Infidelity, whilst confessing that that ambition was above all suspicion of being any ordinary pursuit of riches, or any particular regard to reputation.

By this time a strong reciprocal affection had grown

up between Elizabeth Sharples and Richard Carlile. She was aware of all the circumstances of his union with, mutual separation from, and present simple friendship with Jane Carlile. Accordingly, she consented to their living together as man and wife on his release from prison. This union was defended by Elizabeth in the preface to the first volume of *Isis*. Nothing, she here states, could have been more pure, more free from venality, than this union. It was not only a marriage of two bodies, but of two congenial spirits, of two minds reasoned into the same knowledge of true principles, each seeking an object on which virtuous affections might rest, and grow, and strengthen. They who were married equally morally, would not find fault with her; but where marriage was merely of the law or for money, and not of a soul, there she looked for abuse. They had passed over a legal obstacle, and remembered that they were human. They had not fallen into the error of pledging love for life, hoping, in the absence of that pledge, to make it last the longer.

Carlile also replied to the attacks made on this union of his with Eliza Sharples. Stating that on the subject of marriage he had ever been the advocate and consistent practiser of monogamy, of the honourable and happy and mutual attachment of one man to one woman, he averred the basis of such an attachment was the divine law of love and affectionate chastity, and not the human law. He was now living up to this divine law in the highest sense in which it could be interpreted, openly, honourably, and with injury to no one. His union was pure in spirit *and was pure*. It concealed neither motive nor purpose. It did not intrude itself upon the world's attention, but it did not shrink from the world's scrutiny.

It is interesting to note here that Carlile hesitated

at Shelley's views of marriage as defined in the author's *Queen Mab*. When that philosophical poem was threatened with suppression, Carlile published it to vindicate the principle of free discussion. Explaining this in the *Republican* for February 1, 1822, Carlile adds: "We hesitate before we give assent to the author's view of marriage, particularly as he strikes at the contract without modifications, and seems desirous of destroying it without defining a better system."

With Eliza Sharples, Carlile made a lecturing tour of the country, on their return from which they settled in Enfield. Here they lived for seven years. Their daughter, Theophila, who settled with their children in America in 1861, and died there in January, 1914, described this Enfield home in her "life" of her father written in 1899, so far away both as to time and place from the setting of the picture. She recalls the garden, the fruit trees, and the fine spreading yew on the front lawn, under which tea was often served in fine weather. She continues:—

"With the writer, as far as life has yet lasted, have lingered some precious memories. The memories of her birthplace made sweet and hallowed by the remembrance of one who was all tenderness and gentleness, and who spent much time with her, working and walking in the pretty garden, and occasionally in the orchard beyond the garden. Sometimes as we walked by the house the old-fashioned latticed window would be thrown open, and a beautiful face, adorned with long ringlets, would smile down upon us; and she remembers what a pretty frame for this beautiful picture the vines, the jessamine and honeysuckles made. There was, too, a pretty lawn, in the centre of which grew a tree with wide-spreading branches, where seats and a table were always ready to receive gathered flowers and weary little girls, who here loved to climb

upon father's knee and fall happily asleep. But oh, the mystery of it. How strange it was that whenever she might fall asleep she always awoke in her own bed. But the garden, what a subject of wonder it was with its old-fashioned flowers, chief amongst which were its wonderful moss roses which grew to such perfection there, and the mignonette so fragrantly sweet; nor can the writer see these roses or inhale the fragrance of mignonette to this day without being instantly transported back to dear Old Enfield Highway of half a century and more ago. This little girl was fortunate—or was it unfortunate?—in having so much of the time of this tender and loving father. She learned long afterwards that it was because of his failing health he had to live in the garden in summer and his room in the winter, because he could breathe nothing else; and thus the two least competent ones were relegated to the garden and inactivity, the last baby in the family and its failing head."

A bitter struggle with poverty was now waged and the little family oft-times starved for days at a stretch. Yet a beautiful love and respect linked the members together. Light is thrown upon this mutual regard as also the suffering to which Carlile's activity condemned his dependants in a letter written by Eliza Sharples to Thomas Cooper, the author of the *Purgatory of Suicides,* from 13 Maidstone Street, Hackney Road, on July 28, 1849. I extract the following:—

"My Dear Sir,—Richard Carlile thought himself bound not only to sacrifice the comfort of his family, but he believed it to be his duty in conformity with his views to devote himself to death, if the advocacy of his principles exacted it. Enlightened and fortified by sovereign reason, he affirmed boldly that which he conceived to be the truth; he saw that the corruption

and avarice of the priests was the source of all misery and mischief in society; that the beliefs of certain opinions and the observances of some ceremonies were of no use either to enlighten the mind or purify the heart; he found the mass of mankind, not understanding the mysteries of the sacred rites, had fallen into a gross superstition, and the ministers who were established first to make men good had turned the priesthood into a vile trade, minding only the outward show of religion; he found the errors of the human mind nearly the same in all countries and in all times, and that selfishness was the parent of all vice; that government was bad because it did not seek to minister to the public welfare.

"Thus did Richard Carlile, with an ardent zeal for liberty, esteeming personal poverty no disgrace, render himself fit to conquer the most powerful government in the world, leaving the field clear for those who came after to reap advantages.....He did not suffer himself to be moved by ignominy, distress, or the most cruel suffering, but continued steadfast in the cause of truth, not because it was profitable or delightful, but because it was just.....

"And after all these years of suffering and toil he died wanting the necessaries of life; Oh, ye gods! Such being the reward of sincerity, who then shall marvel at its absence?.....Hypocrisy is the vice of the age, and hypocrites are made its teachers.....

"A nobler, a greater, a better man never breathed than Richard Carlile; but this is not the age of appreciation, the time has not arrived to do justice to his memory.....

"Since the death of R. C., more than six years ago, a great deal of thinking and talking about doing something for the children has taken place; but until now I, individually, have never solicited any friend's assist-

ance or interference.....Mr. C. died leaving the three children entirely unprovided for; they have consequently been subjected to every degree of wretchedness—often without food; still they have struggled on, struggled on almost without hope.....Julian, the eldest of the children, will be fifteen in September next; a quiet, steady, sedate, truthful boy, he is now engaged as an errand boy getting 3s. 6d. a week. He has been in this place about twelve months, and has a very good character; my wish is to get him into the Post Office, St. Martin's le Grand.....he writes and reads well, and that is all he knows beyond a few rules in arithmetic; the advantages in respect to education are very limited, having been taught principally by myself under very untoward circumstances..... Hypatia is the eldest girl, so called after the beautiful and philosophic Hypatia.....is a delicate girl of thirteen, only fit for needlework; she works from 8 a.m. to 8 p.m. collar stitching for 2s. per week.....is just treading in the steps of womanhood to the same extent of helplessness in which all are placed when they arrive there, who have only sorrow and labour as their portion. Hypatia is prematurely a woman, subdued in spirit by a too early knowledge of care and anxiety; my desire is to be able to maintain her for a few months until she has a knowledge of the millinery business, and so command a little trade herself; plain work is destroying both soul and body. Theophila, the youngest, a girl of twelve, is a fine girl for her age, entirely free from superstition.....School is her desire, but, like the rest, she has derived very little from what is termed education; I crave assistance and opportunity to forward that germ within that will, I trust, one day make her a valuable member of society.

"Thus, Sir, I have given you an epitome of my position. Many have said: 'Why not devote your-

self to public usefulness?' My answer is because my helpless family demanded all my attention: night and day I had to struggle for daily bread, and if the physical is weakened the mind is sure to be paralyzed. They are getting now beyond immediate care, and abler somewhat to assist themselves, which will leave me more able to combat the melancholy prospect before me, and, I hope, perform a task which is the first wish of my heart—to write the life of Richard Carlile. Nothing is wanting but the means of living to enable me to do this....."

Although it is anticipating, perhaps it is as well to relate what happened to these children. Julian was killed in the Civil War. Hypatia married, had sons and daughters, and died, at an early age, in extreme poverty. Theophila lived to pay a tribute to her father's memory, had one daughter, enjoyed some comfort, and died at the age of seventy-seven.

XXVII.—"THE CHRISTIAN WARRIOR."

Carlile's last paper was the *Christian Warrior*. That phase of his career and the progress in opinion and retrogression in opinion that it marked, has been treated well by G. J. Holyoake. In his preface to the first volume of the *Republican* Carlile wrote: "Science is the Anti-Christ." He was then a Deist and approved of science. In his *Christian Warrior* he wrote: "Science is the Christ." He was then an Atheist and approved even more thoroughly of science. The *Republican* was his first paper, the *Christian Warrior* his last.

Referring to these declarations, Holyoake says: "The two extremes of Carlile's career exhibit a coincidence of terms, but betray to the initiated observer a radical progress and distinction of opinion.....We commonly find that extreme political enthusiasts in youth, pass, in old age, like Sir Francis Burdett, into extreme conservatism; but it is a phenomenon in intellect that Carlile, whose convictions, not his passions, led him to hold positive materialism, should lapse into a more than Swedenborgian mysticism.....It seems like the artifice of a beaten man to conciliate an implacable enemy. But Carlile was no beaten man. A few months only before his death, he wrote to Sir Robert Peel, in reference to the imprisonment of Mr. Southwell and myself, avowing his determination to renew martyrdom, if Sir Robert persisted in reviving persecution. But Carlile did make the capital error of proposing to explain science under Christian terms, which was giving to science, which is universal, a sectarian character. Hence, he was found using the words 'God,' 'soul,' 'Christ,' etc., with all the pertinacity of a divine, and scandalising his friends by taking out his diploma as a preacher. In this, he manifested his old courage. He was still true to himself, and was still an Atheist, but veiling his materialism under a Swedenborgian nomenclature.....This was his error of judgment, not an alteration of conviction..... From being a Material Atheist, he became a Christian Atheist. His definition of a Christian at this stage was a man purged from error [*Vide, Cheltenham Free Press,* August, 1842]. That this course was no more than a mode of inculcation of his favourite Atheism is evident, intrinsically, and also from the fact that he was so much a realist, as to still avow his detestation of fiction; and so coherently did he keep to this text, that he never ceased to make war on poetry, theatres,

and romance, from the commencement of his career down to the last number of the *Christian Warrior*."

Carlile explained and defended his employment of mystic phraseology in the following passage that Holyoake quotes from the *Christian Warrior*: "The first problem in human or social reform is *through what medium must it be made*. In what is called a religious state of society, that is, a state of idolatry and superstition, can reform be carried out through any other medium than its religion? My experience, added to the best advice I could find, is that with a religious people religion is the only medium of reform. If I were opposed in that problem, I could successfully defend my side of it. The Charter shall change the constituency of the House of Commons, without improving the House. Socialism may create twenty Tytherlies, but it has still done nothing for the nation. But science thrown into the Church as a substitute for superstition in the education of the people, begins at once to regenerate the people, the parliament, the institutions, and the throne. It is the substitution of the known for the unknown, the real for the unreal, the certain for the uncertain. Religion is the erroneous mind's chief direction. It must be corrected by and through the medium which it most respects. It rejects all other opposing conditions, and increases its tenacity for its errors. To reform religion by science is to regenerate fallen man, and to save a sinking country."

Holyoake's comment on this apology is excellent, and one regrets that his wisdom was not always of equal strength: "I conceive that Science is independent of Theology in its essence and its terms. Religion may be brought to Science by adroit interpretations, and improved in character and significance; but Science can never be brought to Religion without

being 'paltered in a double sense,' and lowered in dignity and intelligibility."

Holyoake is wrong in thinking that Carlile took out his licence as a preacher in accordance with his scheme of mystic employment or religious phraseology to teach the truths of Atheism and Science. The truth is that the authorities, in order to prevent him from speaking in the open-air, claimed that none but licensed clergymen were entitled to exercise this right. Accordingly, Carlile made a formal declaration of belief in God and paid the requisite 2s. 6d. This may suggest a juggling with terms but it was in accordance with Carlile's consistent policy to take oaths and make legal declarations when and if required, on the ground that they were meaningless, and that his avowal of unbelief rendered such declarations absurd. He treated all such declarations with contempt and formal observance.

Carlile first inclined to this mysticism in 1825. His six years' imprisonment and his keenness on free discussion inclined him to consider himself an incarnation of the Word, of reason, or the logos. His association with Robert Taylor and his enthusiasm for the astronomico-theological interpretation strengthened his bias in this direction. Then his Freemasonry studies gave additional weight to this usage of allegorical phraseology.

That all this implied no recantation will appear from the last words he wrote in the *Christian Warrior* thirteen days before his death: "The enemy with whom I have to grapple is one with whom no peace can be made. Idolatry will not parley. Superstition will not treat or covenant. They must be uprooted for public and individual safety."

XXVIII.—Death and After.

The Enfield lease ran out in November, 1842, and Carlile determined to return to Fleet Street to live as well as to work. "Isis" being on a visit to Torquay, he imprudently carried this resolution into effect on January 7, 1843. He was seized with illness that speedily proved dangerous, and "Isis" returned from Devonshire to find the family in Fleet Street and Carlile dying. He had returned, as his daughter wrote so long afterwards, "to die on the old ground where for twenty-seven years he had waged such a stern fight against tyranny and injustice. But where could a place be found that was more fitting than this, for the death of a hero of a hundred fights, the battlefield itself?"

Carlile struggled through January, but the following month proved fatal, and on February 10, 1843, he passed away. He was unable to speak for some time prior to his death, but his last words, when he felt a paralysis coming over him, spoken with a great effort of will-power was: "I am the same man I have always been. I have gone neither to the right nor to the left. My aim has been to accomplish one great purpose."

He bequeathed his body for the purpose of anatomical dissection to his friend, Dr. Laurence, and his remains were removed from his residence in Bouverie Street, Fleet Street, to St. Thomas's Hospital, on Tuesday, February 14, where a post-mortem examination was conducted in the presence of a numerous assemblage of friends and members of the medical profession. The chest and abdomen only were opened,

and the necessity that existed for the knowledge of anatomy, not only to the surgeon, but to the physician, was shown. Mr. Grainger delivered a short address on the motives that actuated Carlile in giving his remains for dissection. The speaker ranked Carlile with the illustrious Bentham who had also left his body for anatomical dissection. He declared that Mr. Carlile deserved the approbation of all the friends of humanity for attempting to remove the prejudice against anatomical examinations. It is to be regretted that Mr. Grainger considered it part of his function to vindicate medical men from the charge of irreligion and to contend that medical and anatomical studies, if *properly* pursued, served to demonstrate the truth, not only of natural, but of revealed religion.

Carlile's burial took place at Kensal Green Cemetery. He was laid in the consecrated part of the ground. At the interment, a clergyman appeared, and with the usual want of feeling and of delicacy, persisted in reading the Church service over him. His eldest son Richard, who represented his sentiments as well as his name, very properly protested against the proceeding as an outrage upon the principles of his father and the wishes of the family. Of course, the remonstrance was disregarded, and Richard, his brothers, and their friends left the ground. The clergyman then proceeded to call Carlile "his dear departed brother," and to declare that he "had died in the sure and certain hope of a glorious resurrection."

Carlile left six children—Richard, Alfred, and Thomas Paine, by his wife Jane Carlile; and Julian, Theophila, and Hypatia, by his wife, Eliza Sharples.

Jane Carlile survived him only four months. She died in the same house, No. 1 Bouverie Street, and was buried in the same grave.

Eliza Sharples survived until 1861. She experienced great privations, devoted herself to the education of her children, established a literary and scientific institution at the back of Warner Street Temperance Hall, and assisted in the conversion of Charles Bradlaugh, whom she befriended during his persecution by his relatives.

EPILOGUE

WITH the living, imitation is held to be the sincerest form of flattery; the dead we cannot flatter. But we can serve our fellows, and attain to the true heights of our own being by emulating the virtues of the dead warrior. The battle which his dead spirit bids us fight is a hard and unpopular one, but it is a battle which will result in victory for the free; a battle in which freedom's sons will endure privations, oft-times want the necessaries of life, and suffer the contempt, if not the actual persecution, of the world; a battle in which, however, the sense of helping that cause that lacks assistance, of righting the wrong that needs resistance, of raising the intellectual capacity of the human race, of showing the workers the path of direct economic emancipation, will fully recompense for the pleasures forgone and kind words which society never extended to us. We again prostrate our spirit across the gulf of time; we see again this lion-hearted Richard firmly standing to his colours; we note his detestation of hypocrisy, and the manner in which he fought the conventional morality and political corruption and despotism of his time. By defiance he defeated Governmental Terrorism; by revolt we shall accomplish the emancipation of society, and pay the tribute of *individual* and social emulation to his memory.

APPENDICES

I.—Foote's Tribute.

This work would be incomplete did we fail to reproduce G. W. Foote's tribute to the memory of Richard Carlile. Writing in 1913 in the *Freethinker* Mr. Foote said :—

"Richard Carlile was happier than he knew. His own indomitable manhood was equal to anything. No one ever looked on the face of danger with greater equanimity. He was as stubborn as the oak of his native Devonshire, as enduring as the Dartmoor granite. And he had friends amongst the people, and friends of eminence like the great Jeremy Bentham. But he was unaware that his fight was watched by two mighty poets, both Republicans and Freethinkers, both friends of human liberty and progress, both young and fated to die young, and both destined to become fixed stars in the firmament of English literature. Richard Carlile has been sneered at by dilettante reformers, who had none of his passionate devotion to principle, nor a single spark of his fiery courage. They could never have wielded his sword even if they had seized it in a moment of unwonted enthusiasm. He fought like a Titan, and there was no room for 'delicacy' in such a struggle. He had all the qualities that were requisite. And the two most exquisite poets of his time—for Coleridge was alive then, but not creative—looked out from their towers of song and saw where his whirling sword gleamed in the desperate fight, and recognized, with the intuition of genius, that he was a true hero battling for the most precious possession of humanity; for that intellectual liberty, without which life is a slavery and happiness a disgrace."

The two here referred to are Keats and Shelley. John Keats writing just before Carlile's trial came on expressed

the erroneous opinion that the authorities would not dare to proceed with the prosecution. His reason was a sound one: "The trials would light the flame they could not extinguish. Do you not think this of great import?" The trials did come on. They did light a flame authority has not been able to extinguish.

The account of Carlile's sentence and conviction reached Shelley at Florence. Writing to the Gisbornes on November 6, 1819, he said: "Have just finished a letter of five sheets on Carlile's affair." What became of it we do not know. We can only judge what Shelley said from what he had written on like cases, if there were any really like cases to the wonderful trials and defiances of Richard Carlile.

Shelley's first important prose work was a "Letter to Lord Ellenborough," before whom Daniel Isaac Eaton, a Deist brought up in France, was tried for blasphemy in March, 1812, for publishing Paine's *Age of Reason.* Eaton defended himself, but had hardly uttered a sentence before he was prohibited by Ellenborough from entering into the reasons for his unbelief. Eaton was sentenced to eighteen months' imprisonment and to stand in the pillory for two hours. Shelley was not yet twenty, and he waited to see if some older or more influential champion of freedom would raise his voice in protest, but no one spoke, and the young poet stepped into the breach. The manuscript of his letter was entrusted to Mr. Syle, a well-known printer and publisher of Barnstaple, who printed the pamphlet but destroyed the greater part of the edition. Eaton had been tried nineteen years previously, at the Old Bailey in 1793, for publishing Thomas Paine's *Rights of Man,* and found "guilty of publishing but without criminal intention." Shelley's own preface runs as follows: "Advertisement.—I have waited patiently for these last four months, in the hope that some pen fitter for the important task would have spared me the perilous pleasure of becoming the champion of an innocent man. This may serve as an excuse for delay to those who think I have let pass the aptest opportunity;

but it is not to be supposed that in four short months the public indignation raised by Mr. Eaton's unmerited suffering can have subsided."

The letter was splendidly reasoned and magnificent in its fearlessness. Said Shelley :—

"My Lord.....there are no laws which screen you from the reproof of a nation's disgust, none which ward off the just judgment of posterity, if that posterity will deign to recollect you.....Do you think to convert Mr. Eaton to your religion by embittering his existence? You might force him by torture to profess your tenets, but he could not believe them, except you should make them credible, which perhaps exceeds your power. Do you think to please the God you worship by this exhibition of your zeal?.....in a civilized and enlightened country a man is pilloried and imprisoned because he is a Deist and no one raises his voice in the indignation of outraged humanity .....that mockery of a trial at which your Lordship presided.....fetters of iron cannot bind or subdue the soul of virtue. From the damps and solitude of its dungeon it ascends, free and undaunted, whither thine, from the pompous seat of judgment, dare not soar. I do not warn you to beware lest your profession as a Christian should make you forget that you are a man; but I warn you against festinating that period, which, under the present coercive system, is too rapidly maturing, when the seats of justice shall be the seats of venality and slavishness, and the cells of Newgate become the abode of all that is honourable and true.....

"I have not addressed this letter to you with the hopes of convincing you that you have acted wrong. The most unprincipled and barbarous of men are not unprepared with sophisms to prove that they would have acted in no other manner, and to show that vice is virtue. But I raise my solitary voice to express my disapprobation, so far as it goes, of the cruel and unjust sentence you passed upon Mr. Eaton; to assert, so far as I am capable of influencing, those rights of humanity which you have wantonly and unlawfully infringed."

We can also estimate the spirit and power of Shelley's tribute when we remember that he was at Leghorn when the Peterloo massacre, at which Carlile was present, took place. Shelley at once wrote his immortal *Song to the Men of England.*

Foote does well to recall Shelley's tribute to Carlile's courage and to remind us that it was suppressed. Thirty-seven years before, Foote wrote a biography of Carlile, drawing largely on Holyoake, from which we select only the following words of criticism and tribute :—

"In proportion as we value a free Press, so ought we to be grateful to those who achieved it for us at the cost of personal comfort and public repute. Their number is great, and the memory of most must perish; but others will never be forgotten; their splendid championship or loyal devotion being their passport to deathless fame. These memorable ones are of two kinds—those who have adduced impregnable arguments for the cause, adorned with the eloquence of conviction, and those who have practically striven for it in actual warfare. Of the former John Milton is the supreme English type, of the latter Richard Carlile.

"In England the ruling classes always dreaded freedom of discussion and criticism, and were ever ready to exercise a rigid censorship over the press. When arbitrary suppression was possible it was invariably employed; since then, until quite recently, invidious legislation has been resorted to. The nineteenth century witnessed the trial of each method and the final extinguishment of both. During the first twenty years of it high-handed acts of power were levelled against authors and publishers; during the second twenty years stamp duties on newspapers were imposed to obstruct their sale among the poorer classes. Fortunately, both evils were broken down by the resolute opposition of noble-minded men, who valued 'the liberty to know, to utter, and to argue freely, according to conscience, above all liberties' of whom Richard Carlile was the noblest, the most sincere, the most intrepid.....

"It cannot, of course, be pretended that Richard Carlile was a man of great genius, or that his writings are destined to survive; neither can we admit, with Mr. Holyoake, that such workers as journalists, orators, and politicians, who popularize ideas and principles, confer greater good on mankind and more powerfully promote progress, than the great creative minds; for if those minds did not originate ideas it is certain that the writers and speakers of smaller calibre could not popularize them. But this, at least, may be claimed for Carlile, that he spent one-fourth of his mature life in prison as the consequence of his manly persistence in the course of conduct which his conscience approved; that he never once flinched from danger, never temporized with the oppressor, never once looked back after putting his hand to the plough. There was no contemporary publicist who wrote so bodly as he, no one who shrank less from the freest expression of principles the most extreme. The example he set is worthy of emulation; and his courage and endurance, while they give fresh ardour to the wavering, ought also to shame those who are persuaded that superstitions abound, and yet will lift no finger to remove them, who perceive a great work of reformation to be performed, and yet never bestir themselves in any degree to assist it. When Carlile wrote and spoke and struggled he stood face to face with an almost implacable enemy that gave no quarter, showed no mercy. The blows of oppression rained upon his devoted head at every step of his march, and the slings and arrows of outrageous fortune constantly assailed him; but he never quailed before any danger, nor was deterred by any difficulty.....

"At the time when monuments are impartially reared to celebrate public benefactors one will be apportioned to Richard Carlile. The work he achieved for Freethought was impossible of accomplishment by any other man; no other possessed at once so dogged a courage and so clear a conception of principle."

II.—The Vice Conspiracy.

Societies for the preservation of "religion" and "morality" took their rise with the election of William III to the throne in 1688. They flourished as competing and distinct organizations down to 1792 when the Proclamation Society was formed in order to give expression to the proclamation against "vice" contained in the King's speech. In 1802, an auxiliary organization —termed the Society for the Suppression of Vice—was founded. This superseded the Proclamation Society and became notorious for its warfare against Sunday trading and pleasure and its persecution of "seditious" and "blasphemous" publications. It published a list of subscribers in 1802 and again in 1804. It issued a third list in June 1825, consisting of 239 names. Of these, three were bishops, nine were lords, and sixty were priests. The Bishops were :—

(1). Shute Barrington, Durham. Annual income, £18,210. Uncle of Viscount Barrington. Appointed the Bishop of St. David's a prebend of Durham at annual salary of £2,000; also his relative, Rev. George Barrington, at one of £1,300.

(2). Thomas Burgess, St. David's. Annual income £6,260. Related several notorious sinecurists.

(3). Edward Legge, Oxford. Annual income £3,500. Uncle to William Legge, Earl of Dartmouth. Appointed his relative and namesake, Edward Legge, Dean of Windsor, at an annual salary of £1,000 a year. Several relatives drew pensions for services they had never rendered.

These three bishops voted for the infamous Despotic Measures. Between them they held the patronage of 191 livings, 3 archdeaconries, 30 prebends, and numerous precentorships.

The lords supporting the society were state pensioners, sinecurists, proprietors of rotten boroughs, and supporters of the Despotic Measures. The priests included deans, archdeacons, prebendaries, and ordinary priests. Also the reverend fellows who diverted the annual income and thirty-seven livings in the gift of Eton College from the purposes of charity to their own use. Amongst others we have Charles Digby, Canon of Wells and of Windsor. His income was £900 a year. He was a son of Earl Digby who voted for the Despotic Measures.

Parliamentary members included :—

(1). William Wilberforce, M.P. for Bramber. The votes were 20. Lord Calthorpe, who voted for the Despotic Measures, was owner of this seat.

(2). Charles Bragge Bathurst, M.P. for Harwich, who voted for the Despotic Measures. Brother-in-law of Viscount Sidmouth.

(3). Rt. Hon. Charles Grant, M.P. for Inverness-shire. Represented an electorate of three and drew an annual salary of £1,600. His two brothers, Francis William, and Robert, were members for Elgin County.

(4). Sir James Graham, M.P. for Carlisle, Recorder of Appleby. Represented 750 votes and the Duke of Norfolk.

In all, the Vice Society controlled 591 livings, over 200 prebends, precentorships, etc., several parliamentary seats, and extensive indirect influence. Its members sat as magistrates and served on packed county juries to try causes in which they were the prosecutors. They were visiting magistrates to the gaols where their victims were incarcerated and so completed the round of their infamy, corruption, and persecution.

III.—Interests and Despotism.

Besides the three bishops already mentioned, twenty others voted for the Despotic Measures of 1818. It would be a wearisome business to record their names and interests. It is more to the point that none voted against these measures, and only two, the Bishops of Norwich and Rochester, abstained. In addition, there were the Lords and the Members of the House of Commons, who voted for these measures. In the following list we name some of the bishops and their lordly and legislative associates who supported these measures, selecting names famous for their interests and influence. Some of these names stand to-day for wealth and social position whilst the descendants of the brave men who warred for public freedom live in want and obscurity. We recall these names as an indictment of " our noble families " who owe their " nobility " to rapacity and shameless corruption.

Voted for Despotic Measures, 1818.

(1). Charles Manners Sutton, Archbishop of Canterbury. Annual income £26,820. Patron of 140 livings. Family connections : Cousin to Duke of Rutland, Colonel Manners, M.P. for Cambridgeshire, Colonel Lord William Manners, M.P. for Leicestershire, and Robert Manners, M.P. for Cambridge. Father of Charles Manners Sutton, M.P. for Scarborough and speaker of the House of Commons at a salary of £6,000 a year, Judge-Marshal and Advocate-General. Brother of Thomas Lord Manners, Lord Chancellor of Ireland. Related by inter-marriages to the Earl of Carlisle, the Duke of Devonshire, the Marquis of Stafford, the Duke of Norfolk, and the Archbishop of York.

(2). Venables Vernon, Archbishop of York, annual income £16,100. Patron of 80 livings, 50 prebends, besides precentorships, chancellorships, sub-

deaneries, etc. Brother of Lord Vernon and Earl Harcourt.

(3). HARCOURT, William Harcourt, Earl of. Ranger of Windsor Park and Master of the Robes, at £6,100 per annum.

(4). STAFFORD, George Grenville Levison Gower, Marquis of. Hereditary Sheriff of Sutherlandshire. Parliamentary influence: Staffordshire and Lichfield, one member each.

(5). BROWNLOW NORTH, Bishop of Winchester. Annual income £8,730. Uncle to the Earl of Guildford. Patron of 2 archdeaconries, 12 prebends, 6 minor canonnies, and 12 livings.

(6). GUILDFORD, Francis North, Earl of. His uncle the bishop appointed his other uncle, the Hon. Francis North, prebendary of Winchester.

(7). JAMES CORNWALLIS, Bishop of Lichfield and Coventry, Dean of Durham. Annual income £9,590. Patron of 26 prebends, 18 vicarages, 4 rectories, besides succentorships, precentorships, treasurerships, etc. Uncle to the Marquis of Cornwallis.

(8). CORNWALLIS, Charles, Marquis of. Son-in-law to the Duke of Gordon. Master of the King's Staghounds at £2,000 per annum.

(9). GORDON, Alexander, Duke of. Keeper of the Great Seal at £3,000 per annum. Son and daughter pensioners. Nephew of Lord Charles Spencer, pensioner and sinecurist at £2,500 a year. Related to Rev. Robert Nares, Archdeacon of Stafford, and Canon of Lichfield. Parliamentary influence: Woodstock, 2; Oxford City, 1.

(10). MARLBOROUGH, George Spencer, Duke of. Nephew of Lord Charles Spencer and cousin to the Duke of Gordon. Parliamentary influence: Woodstock, 2 members; Oxford City, 1 member.

(11). GEORGE PELHAM, Bishop of Exeter, Canon of Chichester, Vicar of Wellingley and Bexhill. An-

nual income £6,500. Brother of the Earl of Chichester. Patron of 48 livings, besides diocesan, cathedral, and collegiate appointments.

(12). CHICHESTER, Thomas Pelham, Earl of. Parliamentary influence : Lewes, 1 member.

(13). HENRY RYDER, Bishop of Gloucester, Dean of Wells. Annual income £2,200. Patron of one Archdeaconry and 25 livings. Brother of the Earl of Harrowby.

(14). HARROWBY, Dudley Ryder, Earl of. Lord President of the Council at £4,000. Parliamentary Influence : Tiverton, 2 members.

(15). CHURCHILL, Francis Almonic Spencer, Lord. Brother to the Duke of Marlborough.

(16). GEORGE HENRY LAW, Bishop of Chester. Brother of the famous Chief Justice, Lord Ellenborough. Related to Lord Castlereagh by marriage. Annual income £4,700. Patron of 1 archdeaconry, 6 prebends, and 30 livings.

(17). ELLENBOROUGH, Edward Law, Lord. Brother of the Bishop of Chester. Enjoyed an enormous salary as clerk of the King's Bench. Declared during the opening session of 1820 that the country did not want "philosophers from the loom" nor "statesmen from the spinning jenny."

(18). LONDONDERRY, Robert Stewart, First Marquis of.

(19). CASTLEREAGH, Robert Stewart, Viscount. Eldest son of the foregoing. Secretary of State and Commissioner for India at £7,500 per annum. Impossible to give a correct estimate of his total income. In the two years ended January 5, 1816, his net personal income was over £70,000.

(20). STEWART, Charles William, Lord. Second son of Londonderry. Enjoyed several thousands of pounds a year income as Ambassador to Vienna, Lord of the Bedchamber, etc.

(21). CAMDEN, John Jeffries Pratt, Marquis of. Recorder of Bath and Teller of the Exchequer. Castle-

reagh's uncle. As Teller of the Exchequer he received the enormous salary of £23,093. The great sinecures being about to be attacked in 1817, the Marquis suddenly resigned all the fees and emoluments of his office, retaining only the regulated salary of £2,500.

(22). HERTFORD, Francis Ingram Conway Seymour, Marquis of. Castlereagh's uncle. Lord Chamberlain to the Household at a salary of £3,500 a year, and with an enormous patronage which he exercised on behalf of his family. His two brothers were notorious sinecurists and enjoyed each £9,945 per annum from the State, for which they returned no services.

(23). SEYMOUR, Hugh, M.P. for Antrimshire. Cousin to Castlereagh, nephew to the Marquis of Hertford, son-inlaw to the Marquis of Cholmondeley.

(24). CHOLMONDELEY, George James, Marquis of. Sinecure, £1,540 per annum. Parliamentary influence: Castle-Riding, 1 member.

Though only touching on the fringe of aristocratical family interests and their manner of dovetailing at the public expense, the foregoing list shows how the "noble" families voted to plunder the public purse. It is owing to this fact that, to select only one typical person, the present Lord Londonderry boasts a family seat at Wynard Park, near Stockton-on-Tees, and flourishes by exploiting the miners of Durham and maintaining his interests in Docks and Railway exploitation. His anti-Socialist activities are governed by the same considerations as moved his immediate ancestors to vote for the Despotic Measures of 1818.

How lamentably incomplete our list has been will be seen if we glance at only a few more of the persons who voted for the Despotic Measures either in Lords or Commons:—

(1). CURZON, Asheton Curzon, Viscount. Parliamentary influence: Clitheroe, 1.

(2). DUDLEY and Ward, William, Viscount. Recorder of Kidderminster.

(3). WARD, John, M.P. for Bossiney. See Mount Edgecumbe.

(4). GRENVILLE, Grenville Levison Gower, Viscount. Half-brother to the Marquis of Stafford.

(5). PORVIS, Edward Clive, Earl of. Father-in-law of the Duke of Northumberland. Parliamentary influence: Bishop Castle, Montgomery, Ludlow, Montgomeryshire; 4 members.

(6). NORTHUMBERLAND, Hugh Percy, Duke of. Parliamentary influence: Newport 1, and Launceston 1.

(7). WELLINGTON, Arthur Wellesley, Duke of. Annual income £30,000.

(8). NELSON, William Earl of, D.D. Brother of Horatio, Lord Nelson. Prebendary of Carlisle at £700. Pension by Act of Parliament £7,000.

(9). SALISBURY, James Cecil, Marquis of.

(10). EXETER, Brownlow Cecil, Marquis of. Recorder of Stamford. Parliamentary influence: Stamford, 2 members.

(11). ASHBURNHAM, George, Earl of. Related by marriage to the Duke of Northumberland.

(12). SIDMOUTH, Henry Addington, Viscount. Home Secretary and Commissioner for India. Annual State income £7,500. Son, Hon. Henry Addington, clerk of the pells, at £3,000 per annum; nephew, Henry Unwin Addington, secretary of legation at £590; brother, Rt. Hon. Hiley Addington, Under-Secretary for Home Affairs at £2,135 per annum.

(13). MELBOURNE, Peniston Lamb, Viscount. State pensioner at £2,500 per annum.

(14). LAMB, Hon. George, M.P. for Westminster. Son of the above.

(15). MIDDLETON, George Broderick, Viscount. Related to the Archbishop of Cashel.

(16). MELVILLE, Robert Saunders Dundas, Viscount. Total income from State per annum £10,169. This family enjoyed at the time the Despotic Measures were passed an annual income of £30,208 from State allowances only.

(17). LONSDALE, William Lowther, Earl of. Parliamentary influence: Cockermouth 2, Carlisle 1, Cumberland 1, Westmoreland 2, Haslemere, 1, Appleby 1.

(18). LOWTHER, Rt. Hon. William Viscount, M.P. for Westmoreland. Lord of Treasury and Commissioner for India at £3,100 per annum.

(19). BECKETT, Rt. Hon. John, M.P. for Cockermouth. Judge-Advocate at £2,552. Son-in-law to Earl Lonsdale.

(20). MOUNT EDGECUMBE, Earl of. Parliamentary influence, 5 members, including Bossiney. See Lamb.

And so on. The legislation and corruption were but the amusement of a widely dispersed and inter-locked family party. Only look up the records. And consider all the circumstances of a pension like that enjoyed by Nelson. Then reflect on the speeches in defence of "our happy constitution" and against "that wretch, Carlile." Ask yourself: Have the ruling class changed at all either in their ethics or their tactics, in their piety or their conduct.

IV.—ERSKINE AND WILLIAMS.

THOMAS WILLIAMS was tried before Lord Kenyon in the Court of King's Bench, Westminster, June 14, 1797, for the publication of Paine's *Age of Reason*. The prosecution was instituted by the "Society for Carrying Into Effect His Majesty's Proclamation Against Vice and Immorality." Erskine, who five years earlier had defended Paine's *Rights of Man*, conducted the prosecution. The Counsel for the Defence was Steward Kyd, who had himself been prosecuted for Treason and had been acquitted in company with Hardy and Horne Tooke. Lord Kenyon advised the jury to return a verdict of Guilty. He declared that the Society was composed of "Clergymen and Laymen of the most respectable character in the Kingdom." Sentence was postponed. "A few days after the trial," says Mrs. Fletcher, in her autobiography, describing a visit from and talk with Erskine in January 1820, "as he (Erskine) was walking through Holborn, a woman seized him by the skirts of his coat and dragged him to a miserable room, where Williams the bookseller was laid on a sick-bed with three children in a confluent small box. He was so much struck with the poverty and the wretchedness of the man's condition that he wrote to the Society for the Prevention of Vice, telling them that, as they had gained a verdict prohibiting the sale of Paine's blasphemous book, now there was a noble opportunity to show a truly Christian spirit by praying the Court to mitigate the punishment of this miserable man, already afflicted with disease and poverty. The Society, he said, wrote him a letter full of compliments, but declined to relinquish their victim. The next day their agent called on Erskine with a brief and fee, desiring him to crave the judgment of the Court upon Williams. He refused to take the fee, and, asking for his brief drew his pen through the retainer as counsel for that Society, because 'they loved judgment rather than mercy.'"

Williams surrendered to judgment and was thrown into Newgate pending sentence. A meeting was held by the Society on February 7, 1798. This was attended by Dr. Porteous, Bishop of London, the Bishops of Durham and St. Asaph's, a General, a Lord, two or three Baronets, and the distinguished philanthropist William Wilberforce. The Secretary read Mr. Erskine's letter appealing for the release

without punishment of Williams and speaking of mercy as being "a grand characteristic of the Christian religion." Bishop, Lord, Baronet, Philanthropist, Army Officer, the Society unanimously refused to give any attention to Erskine's request. Williams was sentenced on April 8, 1798, to one year's imprisonment and bound over in his own recognizances for one thousand pounds. The sentence was passed by Justice Ashhurst who described the indicted parts of the *Age of Reason* as "blasphemies against the Almighty God himself, which the most impious and diabolical mind could imagine it was in the heart of man to write." This learned judge also said: "If the name of Our Redeemer was suffered to be traduced, and his holy religion treated with contempt, the solemnity of an oath, on which the due administration of justice depended, would be destroyed, and the law would be stripped of one of its principle sanctions—the dread of punishment." On receiving sentence, Williams asked that he might be allowed to have a bed during his imprisonment. Kenyon replied: "I cannot order that. I daresay you will be treated properly. I wish to have it understood that this sentence is a very great abatement of the punishment, as in modern times, within the period I have sat in Westminster Hall, three years' imprisonment has been ordered for an offence of much less enormity than this, for this publication is horrible to the ears of a Christian."

The sentence caused Paine to write a stinging letter to Erskine. In this Erskine was unfortunate. His previous defence of Paine cost him promotion, and it was not till the death of Pitt in 1806 that he became a member of the Cabinet. He then became Lord Chancellor and held office till March, 1807, when he gave himself up to a life of wit and pleasure in Society. Erskine flourished 1750-1823. Brougham maintained that he was the finest speaker of his day.

NOTES

THOMAS DAVISON served the full two years of sentence in Oakham Gaol. On his release he set up as a printer, publisher and bookseller on his own account at 10 Duke Street, Smithfield. He published many useful works, both periodical and standard, in the cause of Republicanism and Freethought. He died on December 16, 1826, and left a wife and four children in conditions of great financial stress. Richard Carlile said of him, that "he did all that his means would permit him to do," in the struggle.

RICHARD HASSELL died on Thursday, November 9, 1826, at the age of 25. He was born in Dorsetshire and his chief employment to the age of twenty-two was that of carter to his father. His father was well able to give his son a good education, but declined to do so. Instead, he turned him out to work as soon as he was able to direct a horse and cart.

Carlile's imprisonment in Dorchester Gaol roused his curiosity, and one day in 1822, he presented himself at the gaol gates and said that he wanted to see Carlile. The gaoler asked him what for, and Hassell replied that he wanted to ask the truth about the old religion. At the end of three years' imprisonment the magistrates and gaolers had ceased to turn away Carlile's visitors and Hassell was admitted. Hassell taught himself to read and write, and he soon acquired some talent for verse writing, also for philosophical essays. When the prosecution of 1824 came on he hastened to become one of Carlile's shopmen. He defended himself and made a strikingly original defence which was widely published in the ordinary newspaper press of the time. He was sentenced to two years' imprisonment in Newgate, where he established the *Newgate Magazine* and taught himself French and mathematics. He wrote regularly for the *Republican* above his initials, "R. H.," and was a frequent correspondent to the *Mechanics' Magazine*. In this journal he projected a new method of taking the measurement of elevation by mathematical calculation. This was subsequently

widely adopted. He was released from Newgate on June 1, 1826, and returned to London, where he worked for Carlile as printer and translator. At the time of his death it was intended to issue a new republican journal under his editorship. By a strange irony he was buried in St. Clement Dane's Churchyard in the Strand, his burial thus illustrating an evil that formed the subject of his last important essay—a protest on health grounds against the improper burial of dead bodies in the centre of a city.

ROBERT, LORD GIFFORD, Master of the Rolls, died at Dover in August 1826. He came from Ashburton. He was appointed Solicitor-General in 1817, though devoid of all legal ability. In 1819 he became Attorney-General and conducted the "mock trials" against Richard Carlile. His infamous conduct on the Queen's trial earned him further promotion, and it was intended that he should succeed Lord Eldon, the most notorious plunderer and sinecurist of his day, not excluding even Abbott, Baron Tenterden.

HENRY HUNT: flourished 1773-1835. Imprisoned for three months in 1810 for assaulting a gamekeeper, and shared his rooms in gaol with William Cobbett, who was then incarcerated for two years and fined £1,000 for his article on military flogging. In 1812, Hunt unsuccessfully contested Bristol against Sir Samuel Romily. On November 15, 1816, Hunt addressed the Spa Fields meeting with Thistlewood, who was indicted for the Cato Street Conspiracy. Carlile was present at this meeting and also at meetings addressed by Hunt on December 2, 1816, and February 15, 1817. On September 7, 1817, Hunt addressed a meeting in Palace Yard and asked the people to conform to the Seditious Meeting Acts. In 1818 and 1819 he unsuccessfully contested Westminster. Presided at Smithfield and Manchester (Peterloo) Reform Meetings, and was imprisoned in Ilchester Gaol for seditious speeches and assembly. Composed wordy memoirs in gaol and exhibited considerable and useless vanity. In October, 1822, he was released and received with tremendous rejoicing. In 1826, he contested Somersetshire. In August,

1830, he contested Preston against Stanley. In December, 1830, Stanley retired in his favour. He stood for Annual Parliaments, Secret Ballot, Universal Adult Suffrage. In February, 1831, he made a public entry into London, and presented the first petition in behalf of Women's Rights. In October, 1833, he lost his seat and retired from politics. Richard Carlile and Sherwin formed Hunt's Election Committee in 1818, with three electors, West, Giles, and Dolly. In June, 1817, Hunt gave evidence at the Watson trial. He went into Carlile's shop directly after leaving the court, and expressed his approval of Carlile's spirited publishing activity in face of the suspension of the *Habeas Corpus Act.* Approved Carlile's resolve to publish the *Parodies,* and invited him to spend a few days at Middleton Cottage. When Carlile was imprisoned Hunt never uttered a word in his defence, nor in defence of any prisoner under the *Habeas Corpus* Suspension Act.

WILLIAM COBBETT : flourished 1762-1835. Lacked integritv. Born at Farnham, March 9. Came to London in 1783 and became copying clerk to an Attorney. Enlisted some months later in a line regiment. Developed literary ability, was promoted, and served with his regiment in Nova Scotia. Returned to England with his regiment in 1791 and was discharged. Married soldier's daughter, 1792. Attacked military peculation. Proceeded to France and thence to Philadelphia in October, 1792. Became a teacher of French and a professional translator. Drawn into politics and attacked Priestley. Started *The Censor* (January, 1796), and *Porcupine's Gazette* (March, 1797-98). Settled in New York and commenced *The Rushlight.* Sailed for England, June, 1800. Ran a *Daily Porcupine,* October 30—Nov. 1803. In January, 1802, he started *Cobbett's Political Register.* In 1803 he commenced Law Reports, Parliamentary Debates, State Trials. In 1810 he was imprisoned for two years and fined. Threw himself into the Reform agitation but went to America in 1817 to avoid prosecution. Returned to England in 1819 with Paine's bones to vindicate a character he had attacked formerly. Contested Coventry, 1821, and Preston in 1826. Defended himself against a sedition charge in July, 1831. Sat for Oldham in the first Reform Parliament and became a very reactionary gentleman.

JOHN TAYLOR CASE.—Both Attorney-General Gifford and the Judge should have known that the case of John Taylor was no parallel to that of Richard Carlile. Nor was it a case self-respecting persons could cite with merit. Taylor was prosecuted in 1676 in the King's Bench before Sir Matthew Hale. Taylor was brought from Bedlam to plead to the indictment and was obviously a madman. He was solemnly tried on a charge of having said that Jesus Christ was a bastard and a whore-master; that he (Taylor) was a king's son, and his father had sent him as a fisherman to take vipers; that he was Christ's younger brother and an angel of God; and that he feared neither God, Devil, nor Man. It is hard to say who was most insane: Taylor or Sir Matthew Hale. When standing in the pillory, Taylor wore, by order of Hale, a paper bearing the inscription: "For blasphemous words tending to the subversion of all government."

The House of Lords took a special interest in this case. On May 11, 1675, while Taylor was a prisoner at Guildford, they ordered him to be brought to the bar. Three days later he was brought up, and the following order concerning him was made: "That the master or keeper of the hospital of Bedlam (*alias* Bethlem), be, and is hereby, required to receive and keep in safe custody the body of the said John Taylor, and take care that the said John Taylor be kept therein with bread and water, and such due bodily correction as may conduce to his recovery from the madness wherewith at present he seems to be possessed; and if the said John Taylor shall not prove to be mad, but persist in the said blasphemies, it is further ordered that the said keeper of Bedlam (*alias* Bethlem) do cause the said John Taylor to be delivered to be proceeded against according to the law in that case made and provided." On May 20, it was reported that he was not mad, "and yet persisteth in his blasphemies." His case was referred to the judges for consideration.

They reported on November 17 to the Lord Chief Justice of the Common Pleas: "We are of opinion that John Taylor may be proceeded against in the King's ecclesiastical courts for the horrid words mentioned in the examination to be by him spoken. We are also of opinion that, inasmuch as many of the said words tend immediately to the destruction of all religion and government, that the said John Taylor may be proceeded against, by way of indictment or information, in the King's temporal courts, as for an high misdemeanour." The Attorney-General was thereupon ordered to prosecute.

THE REV. THOMAS WOOLSTON was a *disciple of Origen,* whom he studied closely. He was born at Northampton in 1669, and after a brilliant career at Sydney College, Cambridge, received holy orders. He published, in 1705, *The Old Apology,* which was followed by other works in favour of an allegorical interpretation of Scripture. In 1726 he began his *Six Discourses upon the Miracles,* which were assailed in forcible, homely language. Thirty thousand copies were sold and sixty replies received. Woolston put his finest sarcasm and ridicule into the mouth of a Jewish Rabbi. He was tried for five blasphemous libels before the Guildhall, March 4, 1729. The King's Attorney-General, who said the prisoner had been "esteemed as a learned man and a clergyman," declared his work "the most blasphemous book that was ever published in any age whatever." The defence made for Woolston by counsel was that he had no blasphemous intent to bring religion into contempt, but to put it on a better footing and show that the miracles were to be understood in a metaphorical sense and not as literally written. He was found guilty on all the counts, and Chief Justice Raymond declared that the Court would not suffer it to be debated whether writing against Christianity in general was a temporal offence, but said "we interpose only where the very root of Christianity itself is struck at, as it plainly is, by this allegorical scheme, the New Testament and the whole relation of the Life and Miracles of Christ being denied." Woolston was sentenced to a year's imprisonment and a fine of £100. At the expiry of his time, being unable to pay his fine, he remained in the King's Bench Debtor's Prison. Solicitations were made for his release by Dr. Samuel Clarke, but he declined giving security not to offend again in a similar way. Death brought release in 1733.

Writing from prison to the *Lion* in 1828, Robert Taylor truly observed: "I mention Lardner as, perhaps, the most candid and liberal Christian that ever adorned the Christian name. He has drawn largely on our sympathies, for the martyrs of antiquity, the only martyr he had himself known, was the glorious Woolston, but with him he had no sympathy. He has loudly protested against persecution on the score of religion; but his protest meant no more than to make provision for his own reputation, while one of the most learned clergymen and best men the Church of England could ever boast of, lay in the cells of Newgate, unrespited, unpitied, unrelieved. To be sure, it wasn't right—to be sure, it was a

disgrace to a Protestant country—to be sure, it was contrary to the mild spirit of the gospel—to be sure, the man had only maintained the sincere convictions of an honest heart.

'But there—there he lay,
And great, as were his virtues, were his wrongs!'

How sorry everybody was for it! But he died of the gaol-fever for all that."—(Letter 13, Vol. I, pp. 582-3).

LORD CHIEF JUSTICE DENMAN illustrates the accuracy of all that we have said in this work concerning the migration to office and persecution of men who appear first before the public as counsel for the defence of public liberty against infamous persecutions. As Mr. Denman this person appeared for Richard Carlile at one of those stages in his trials where he could not represent himself. Denman also translated and applauded the verses of Callistratus on the patriotism of Harmodius and Aristogeithon who slew the tyrant, Hipparchus, in defence of Athenian liberty. In December, 1840, Denman, as Lord Chief Justice, presided at the trial of Henry Hetherington for blasphemy. Hetherington conducted his own defence and Lord Denman said that "he listened with feelings of great interest, aye, with sentiments of respect, too." He directed the jury that discussions carried on in a sober, temperate, decent style might be tolerated, but "if the tone and spirit is that of offence and insult and ridicule, which leaves the judgment really not free to act, and therefore cannot be truly called an appeal to the judgment, but an appeal to the wild and improper feelings of the human mind, more particularly in the younger part of the community, in that case.....opinions so expressed deserve the character affixed to them in this indictment." The jury at once returned a verdict of guilty.

On January 18, 1841, Hetherington came up for judgment. Four judges refused a rule in arrest of judgment. The defence argued that it was not blasphemous to libel the Old Testament. Lord Chief Justice Denman said: "There is no ground for granting a rule in this case. Though in most cases, I believe not in all, the libel has been against the New Testament; yet the Old Testament is so connected with the

New that it is impossible that such a publication as this could be uttered without reflecting upon Christianity in general; and therefore I think an attack upon the Old Testament of the nature described in the indictment is clearly indictable. It is our duty to abide by the law as laid down by our predecessors, and, taking the cases which have been referred to as assigning the limits within which a publication becomes a blasphemous libel, the publication in question is one. As to the argument that the relaxation of oaths is a reason for departing from the law laid down in the old cases, we could not accede to it without saying that there is no mode by which religion holds society together but by the administration of oaths; but that is not so, for religion, without reference to oaths, contains the most powerful sanctions for good conduct; and I may observe that those who have desired the dispensation from the taking of oaths to be extended have done so from respect to religion, not from indifference to it."

The other judges concurred. Mr. Justice Littledale said: "The Old Testament, independently of its connection with and its prospective reference to Christianity, contains the law of Almighty God; and therefore I have no doubt that this is a libel in law as it has been found to be in fact by the jury."

Mr. Justice Patterson declared: "It is certain that the Christian religion is part of the law of the land. The argument is reduced to this, that an indictment for libel is to be confined to blasphemy against the New Testament. But such an argument is scarcely worth anything, because it is impossible to say that the Old and New Testaments are not so intimately connected that if the one is true the other is true also; and the evidence of Christianity partly consists of the prophecies in the Old Testament."

Hetherington was sentenced to four months' imprisonment in the Marshalsea.

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